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CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
EVENTS OF THE WEEK ...	321	Practical Mysticism. By	
POLITICS AND AFFAIRS:—		J. L. M. ...	337
The Crisis of the War. By		POETRY:—	
H. W. M. ...	324	To All our Dead. By Lucy	
"New Tasks" for America	325	Masterman ...	337
The Revolt of the Soldier's		THE WORLD OF BOOKS. By	
Wife ...	326	Penguin ...	338
The German Rush to the		REVIEWS:—	
East ...	327	A Critic of English Drama	339
A LONDON DIARY. By A		The Public School Boy ...	340
Wayfarer ...	329	Fairies, New and Old ...	342
LIFE AND LETTERS:—		Mr. Davies and Others ...	344
Prisoners of War ...	330	Four Nondescripts ...	346
An "Allocator's" Day ...	331	BOOKS IN BRIEF:—	
The Kettle ...	332	The Renaissance of the	
LETTERS FROM ABROAD:—		Greek Ideal ...	348
The Bribery of Belgium.		THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By	
By A Belgian Deputy ...	334	Lucellum ...	348
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:—		SUPPLEMENT:—	
"A Tragedy of Pride." By		Color Books ...	355
H. N. Brailsford ...	334	Science for Boys ...	356
The Russian Programme in		Our Little Brothers ...	357
Finland. By Wm. T.		Books for Boys ...	358
Goode and A Scandinavian	336	Books for Girls ...	360
The British Case. By W.		History for the Young ...	362
W. Greg ...	336	For the Very Young ...	364
The Prime Minister's		Annals and Others ...	366
Greatness. By the Rev.			
S. Proudfoot ...	337		

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Events of the Week.

THE King has concluded his visit to the front, and its effect has been to emphasize still further, if that were possible, the comradeship which unites the Western Allies. Its most graceful incident has been the conferring of the Order of the Bath on Generals Joffre and Foch, of the Order of St. Michael and St. George on the French Generals most closely in touch with the operations of our own forces, and of the Garter on King Albert. It is inevitable that the doings of our own army should bulk most largely in our thoughts and in our news. The French, moreover, have been generous in their praises of its exploits. The fact remains that, save in Flanders, the whole of the vast line is held by French troops. On them falls the main responsibility for the campaign, and while we have every reason to be proud of the share which General French's army has taken in it, the war in the west is primarily a Franco-German war. The honors conferred on the French Generals, whose skill and judgment have equalled the dash and steadiness of their troops, give some slight expression to the sense of obligation under which we stand to them, and to our admiration of their qualities as men and soldiers. Four commanders of great capacity—Joffre, Foch, Castelnau, and Serrail—seem to have emerged.

* * *

FIVE weeks after the unfortunate battle on the coast of Chile, Admiral Cradock has been avenged. Early on Tuesday morning our ships, under Admiral Sturdee, came up with the German squadron in the South Atlantic, near the Falkland Islands. The superiority must have been

decidedly on our side. The German flagship "Scharnhorst," under Admiral Graf von Spee, was sunk with all its crew. The "Gneisenau" and the "Leipzig" were also sunk, but some of their crews were saved. The "Dresden" and "Nürnberg" got away, but were pursued, and the "Nürnberg" has since been sunk. Our casualties were "very few." The "Scharnhorst" and "Gneisenau" were powerful sister cruisers, well armed, and well protected. The other three are light cruisers, more suitable for commerce-destruction than for battle. This whole German squadron had inflicted much less loss on our shipping than the "Emden" did; its exploit was the sinking of the "Monmouth" and "Good Hope." One battle has destroyed it as a fighting force, and though we know no details, the strategical dispositions which brought it to a decisive action must have been skilful. There are now known to be still at large three German cruisers, the "Bremen," "Dresden," and "Karlsruhe," and two armed auxiliary merchantmen.

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AFTER some weeks of misfortune which seemed to threaten it with disaster, the Serbian army has rallied, and has won a notable success against the Austrian invaders. The Austrians, breaking into Serbia at the angle of the Drina and the Save, which facilitates converging movements, had taken Belgrade (their left), Valievo (centre), and also Ushitsa (right). The Serbian counter-offensive, undertaken on Sunday and Monday, resulted in the smashing of the Austrian right wing, composed of three army corps. The Serbs have advanced rapidly over much of the ground previously lost, and have re-entered Valievo. There is every reason to believe that an important victory has been won, though the telegrams are somewhat confused, and estimate the prisoners taken at two, ten, or even twenty thousand. The medium figure seems to represent the official estimate. The Austrian left remains to be dealt with. It is possible that the Serbians have achieved this recovery by bringing back the large forces with which they had been attempting, rather rashly, to invade Bosnia. The Austrians, thinking them crushed, had apparently withdrawn some of their forces to meet the Russians.

* * *

THE Anglo-Indian force which has invaded Mesopotamia has now advanced considerably beyond Basrah, to the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates. Its vanguard has fought two fresh engagements with the Turks, and has crossed the Tigris at Kurna, and taken that town and 1,100 men. These operations are apparently being conducted in concert with Russian movements, for a brief telegram had already mentioned the arrival of a Russian force on the Tigris, coming presumably from the Persian frontier. With the aid of river gunboats and transport, it is not unlikely that one or both of the Allies may soon reach Bagdad. Further north meanwhile, the Russian advance from Persian territory against Van makes progress. Of the direct downward advance from the Caucasus to Erzeroum little or nothing has been heard this week. There is, however, some reason to suppose that the Russo-British invasion of Turkey from the north and east had caused

delay in the expedition against Egypt. Egypt is now well defended by Australians, Territorials, and Indian troops. In Turkey, meanwhile, the Government is proceeding to the wholesale seizure of British and French property, including the French religious establishments.

* * *

THE good news from our fleet, from Serbia, and from the Persian Gulf, is more than balanced this week by the German success in Poland. The great industrial city of Lodz, which has been the central point in a long series of battles, has been occupied by General von Hindenburg's forces. The Russian official news makes light of this achievement, and describes the evacuation of the town as voluntary. That may be, but it was evacuated only because the advance of the German forces had rendered it untenable. The third invasion of Poland is no longer what it was in its first stage, the impetuous advance of a big single mass up the Vistula from Thorn. There are now three distinct movements in progress in Poland itself, and a fourth in Galicia. We now hear of the advance of an army from East Prussia, which first drove the invading Russians back to Mlawa, and is now twenty miles to the south of that town, and Ciesanow, on the road to Warsaw. Simultaneously, the third army, which marched via Kalisz and Sieradz, has driven the Russians back to Piotrkow. There is no longer any reason to doubt the claim which the Germans made last week to have captured 80,000 Russians during the whole of this advance, and since that announcement their success has continued.

* * *

THE German invasion has presumably two objects. The German staff may hope, with good luck, to take Warsaw. It advanced on Warsaw in the second invasion unopposed, and was overthrown almost at the gates of the Polish capital. It is now advancing by converging roads, with the advantage of having defeated the Russians somewhat heavily on the way. But, apart from the political gain of taking Warsaw (which seems possible, but hardly probable), the Germans may aim even more decidedly at separating the Russian armies in Poland from the army in Galicia, and relieving the pressure on Cracow. A fourth Austro-German army has out-flanked the Russians before Cracow, turning them to the south, and has engaged them at Neu Sandek. This enveloping force has tried to repeat round Cracow the French strategy round Paris. Its right wing (one corps) has, however, been met by Russian reinforcements from the east, and has been defeated, probably with heavy loss. The fortunes of this whole ambitious German offensive in Poland and Galicia are as yet undecided. The Russians are evidently in a far from enviable position, but they may once more turn the tide by bringing up their endless reserve forces.

* * *

THOUGH the Russians believe that six German army corps have been withdrawn from the western front in the last three weeks to back the invasion of Poland, there is still no sign of a change in the deadlock in Flanders and France. The official bulletins have this week been reduced to chronicling such events as the capture of a ferryman's house on the Yser canal, and the blowing up of a single advanced trench in the Argonne region. The little news there is seems to be favorable. The capture of the village of Vermelles by the French is of some small importance, because it is a step towards winning the command of the great trunk road and railway that run from Arras to Lille through Lens and La Bassée. There are also indications of an improvement in the French posi-

tion on the heights of the Meuse, and in the east generally. On the other hand, there has been some renewal of German activity near the coast along the flooded lines, and shells have fallen in East Dunkirk (a village near Nieuport) and in Furnes. For the rest, there is nothing to report, save the continual work of sapping and mining along the whole vast front.

* * *

A TRAGIC ill-luck continues to pursue the Boer rebels. Maritz is a wounded fugitive in German territory and De Wet a prisoner. It is now known that General Beyers has been drowned. He attempted, while wounded, to swim the Vaal River in flood. His horse was shot and he was carried away. His body has since been found. His death removes a clever but not a straightforward man, whose offence, since he was commander of the Union's forces, was graver than that of any of the other rebel leaders. The Government is thus relieved of the painful problem of dealing with him. The Cape press hopes, very wisely, that his death may be accepted as a sacrifice for many. The central fact about the South African rebellion is the loyalty of the main body of the Boers, and this has been gracefully recognized in the decision to name a new warship after General Botha, an honor probably without precedent in a soldier's lifetime.

* * *

PRESIDENT WILSON's message to Congress was mainly busied with the war, which is for America, as for the neutrals in Europe, the absorbing pre-occupation. She is thinking of her own defences. The message advocates not a larger army but a trained citizenry, a national guard of disciplined civilians. It holds that "a powerful navy" is essential, but adds, rather quaintly, "who shall tell us what sort of navy to build?" The experts, in short, are waiting for the lessons of the war. Dr. Wilson urges, however, that America must not be thrown off her balance by a war with which she has nothing to do. He points out that the war has found America handicapped by the want of an adequate merchant marine of her own. His plan for purchasing the interned German liners encounters much opposition, and may be foiled by the refusal of the German owners to sell. He presses a large policy for developing the merchant service. His action in enforcing neutrality, in particular by prohibiting the export of submarines, is already well known. The message makes a noteworthy reference to the possibility of American mediation. That opportunity, says the message, may come "presently," and Dr. Wilson evidently looks forward to the prospect of raising large and permanent issues, for he speaks of "the reconciliation and healing settlement of many matters that have cooled and interrupted the friendship of nations."

* * *

THE several Governments at war have all published books of one color or another, but nothing that they disclose is so important in fixing the responsibility for the European War as the diplomatic revelation made last Monday in the Chamber of a neutral nation. Signor Giolitti, the ex-Premier, was the speaker. He was defending the good faith of the Italian Government in refusing to join the other members of the Triple Alliance in this war, and in justifying that decision he informed the Chamber, to the great astonishment of the Deputies, that Austria had arranged to deliver an ultimatum to Serbia in August, 1913, nine months before the assassination of the Archduke. This ultimatum differed little from the ultimatum that startled Europe this summer. At that time Austria asked Italy to regard herself as bound to support her partners in the Triple Alliance in

such action; but the Italian Government very properly refused. "Should Austria intervene against Serbia," so wrote Signor Giolitti, who was Prime Minister, to the Foreign Minister, the Marquis di San Giuliano, "it is clear that no *casus fœderis* is involved. Nor is there any case for defence, seeing that nobody dreams of attacking her. It is necessary that Austria should be given to understand this in the most formal manner, and it is to be hoped that Germany will exert her influence to dissuade Austria from so perilous an adventure." It looks as if it was in consequence of the answer of the Italian Government that Austria and Germany desisted from their plan at the time.

Two important conclusions follow from this revelation. It is clear that the assassination of the Heir Apparent was in no sense the cause of Austria's sudden outbreak this summer. At the time, other Governments, notably the British and the Russian, recognized in the most ample manner that Austria had a grievance against Serbia, and that she was entitled to demand some kind of satisfaction. But, in point of fact, the murder of the Archduke was simply a convenient occasion for carrying out a design long since matured. If Austria was determined to pick a quarrel with Serbia, the second fact of importance is established by these revelations. The Marquis di San Giuliano informed Signor Giolitti that Austria was acting in common accord with Germany in preparing this ultimatum for Serbia in the summer of last year. Is it credible, then, that Germany was kept in the dark this summer when Austria proceeded to carry out the common plan that was then suspended?

THE Belgian Commission of Inquiry have produced a crushing answer to the German Professors who sought to excuse the atrocities that Belgium has suffered. The answer takes the form of extracts from the orders and proclamations of German generals, commanding or authorizing acts of indiscriminate vengeance and intimidation. "In the case of civilians shooting on the German army a third of the male population will be shot" (At Hasselt on August 17th). "It was with my consent," said von Bülow, in accusing the people of Andenne of "a treacherous surprise," "that the general had the whole place burnt down and about one hundred people shot." At Wavre, Lieutenant-General von Nieber informed the Burgomaster that the civil population of the town had put itself beyond the pale of the Rights of Nations by firing on the German troops, and that if the payment of the sum of £120,000 was not made when due, "the town would be burnt down and the innocent would suffer with the guilty." At Grivegnée, the civilians were ordered to take off their hats or salute German officers. In case of doubt every German soldier was to be saluted. "Anyone who disregards this must expect the military to make themselves respected by any means." The policy of intimidation by frightfulness was the official policy, and the German proclamations are the best evidence of the spirit in which German officers carried it out. Meanwhile, all the correspondents testify to a general work of incendiarism and destruction by the German troops in the Argonne.

HERR BASSERMANN, the official leader of the National Liberal Party, has made a declaration to his followers in the Reichstag, which is perhaps more significant as a clue to German intentions than utterances meant for other audiences. Herr Dernburg, lately Germany's Colonial Minister, and now her special financial envoy in America, has talked of terms of peace which would leave Belgium politically outside the German Empire, bringing her

within the German Customs Union. But Herr Bassermann talks a different language. The "Vorwärts" has made public an important passage in his speech to his party, meeting in secret. "We shall hold fast for all time the countries which have been fertilized by German blood. . . . By bloody war to splendid victory—that is the motto of this great time." The question whether Herr Dernburg or Herr Bassermann would be proved the better prophet in case of a German victory, is one that few people would find it difficult to answer; but Europe will see to it that the question remains hypothetical.

It cannot be said that the meeting of the Chamber has settled the question of Italian neutrality. Senor Salandra's speech was far from being an unconditional affirmation of neutrality, and he won the fierce applause of all sections of the House when he proclaimed Italy's affirmation of her "just aspirations." It is now the German plan to suggest to Italy that some at least of these may be satisfied without a war upon her ally. No less a person than Prince Bülow has been named German Ambassador at Rome, and he will bring with him, it is said, an offer from Austria to cede Trent in return for Italy's continued neutrality. But German diplomacy always threatens when it woos. The Holy War seems to be more in evidence in Tripoli than elsewhere, and Italian public opinion, which blames German agents for stirring up the Arabs, is becoming decidedly anxious. An Italian intervention in the late winter or early spring is now probable. The Russian press, meanwhile, is becoming irritated at Rumania's delay in intervening. She has no longer any reason to fear an attack from Bulgaria, should she move, the alternatives now being a Bulgarian intervention and a neutrality friendly to the Allies.

At the moment when public opinion is already anxious over the publication of a legislative programme, counter-signed by the Tsar, for the abolition of the remnants of Finnish autonomy, news arrives of an attack on the rights of the Duma. The immunity of its deputies from arrest, save by the consent of the Duma itself, is one of its few valuable privileges. Five of its Social Democratic members have been arrested, and will be tried on a charge of high treason. The accusation against them (that they were planning some movement against Tsarism in the army), is precisely the charge on which the whole Social Democratic Party in the Second Duma was sent to prison and Siberia. In their case, the Duma's Commission found them innocent, and declared that the only plot was one of the secret police against its colleagues. Whether the present charge is better founded we do not know. What is important is to note that the bureaucracy still declines to conform itself to the spirit of reconciliation which swept over Russia on the outbreak of the war.

MR. REDMOND gave some exceedingly interesting figures in the course of a recruiting speech last Saturday. He showed that since the war broke out some 54,000 Irish recruits and reservists have joined the colors, more than half of them Roman Catholics. From Belfast alone 3,515 National Volunteers have enlisted. In considering recruiting figures, it is important to remember that before the war began, there were something like 90,000 Irishmen in the Army. In view of these figures, nobody can question Ireland's share in this great struggle. Mr. Redmond took the opportunity of pleading for a spirit of comradeship with the Ulster Volunteers, alluding to the time when Irishmen from both armies would be fighting side by side in the trenches.

Politics and Affairs.

THE CRISIS OF THE WAR.

THE British Government may fairly claim that, so far as some of the less direct and vital issues of the war are concerned, it has enhanced and, in a measure, secured the safety of the nation. It has organized and equipped a powerful and highly efficient army, maintained it in the field, and secured adequate reinforcements. It is approaching the hour when its contribution to the military lines in France and Flanders will be not only a useful but a commanding one; when a million voluntary soldiers will cross the Channel and determine victory in Western Europe. Not less firm is the economic situation which controls and ensures these efforts. The credit of the country is completely re-established. With the defeat and dispersal of the German squadron in the Pacific, the last serious menace to the freedom of our distant maritime commerce disappears, and the siege of German commerce is visibly tightened. Still more gratifying are the successes which we may fairly trace to the general wisdom or the growing liberality of our political genius. It is to no accident of war, no chance benevolence of fortune, that we owe the defeat of the grandiose German plan for fostering internal dissension in the Empire. The concocted South African revolt is over. The hoped-for Mahomedan schism in India never began. Even in Egypt, where the action of all that is most characteristic in our system has only begun to work, our rule has been good and fair enough to avert all sympathy from its Turkish suzerain. The constituents of our Imperial strength are virtually two. The first is the principle of self-government and Parliamentary Government, and where that is as yet undeveloped, of toleration. The second is sea-power. Both are vital elements in the success of the Allies as well as in the safety of our dominions. Germany is a great industrial community, whose wants have grown far beyond the bounds of internal traffic. When they become irrepressible, our maritime siege will have done its work. And when the German ideas of State absolutism, based on force, and of war as the first function of civilization and the natural medicine for its ills, break down too, the war will be essentially won. It is for the German people, not for us, to decree this final failure. But the Anglo-French alliance is not a union of armies and navies alone. It is essentially a combination of the ideas of intellectual liberty, popular representation, government by consent and debate among the people, free criticism and humorous comment on life and institutions. These ideas the Western States represent, and they are ready to stand or to fall with them. Autocratic Germany, on the other hand, is their most formidable opponent. By the stiffness and harshness of her intellectual system, her choice of the ideal of "power" as the pivot of State-life, and the remorseless cruelty and tyranny with which these notions have been worked out by her invading armies in Belgium, she stands for the things which France and Belgium and England have largely outgrown. She is the true modern "Leviathan," the self-justifying idol on whose altar humanity is asked to lay its happiness and its rights.

Now, we hope that we are getting the better of this reactionary power. So far as the invasion of these shores is concerned, we are probably safe. Germany has no force to spare for one more wild gamble on the back of her greater European adventure. But we are far from a position in which we can count on the definite repulse of her armies in Eastern and Western Europe, and the natural sequence of that event in an invasion of German territory and the isolation of her industrial centres in Westphalia and Silesia. Germany may yet succeed in securing one of her three military objectives—namely, the occupation of Warsaw. That event, in turn, would imply the continuance through the winter of the defensive warfare which leaves Belgium and Northern France at her mercy, and postpones the task of reparation to which the nation stands pledged. Thus we cannot yet contemplate an early end of the war. If we have given the blood of our bravest, it must not be shed in vain. If, in truth, this be a war of ideals, our ideal has not yet triumphed. If we believe that justice has been tumbled from her seat, the German tenure of Belgium, as the prelude to its annexation, must constitute, beyond the menace to our shores and sea-commerce, the loss of the war. That result, in its turn, means that the most clerical of European Powers (which is Austria), the most military of Powers (which is Germany), will have defeated the two most pacific and least authoritative of the Western peoples. It involves the greatest disregard of national rights perpetrated since Alsace-Lorraine was annexed in face of the unanimous protest of her delegates at Bordeaux. Such a peace could never last. We should never accept it, even in the remote event of France being forced into it and Russia yielding a half-assent to it. For our peculiar place in the State-world would be gone; and we might fail to maintain precisely those institutions—free military service and Parliamentary Government—on the rejection of which Bismarck's federal Germany was built up.

The Government have, therefore, to summon and hearten the people of these islands for the effort to put down Cæsarism in Western and Central Europe, with the knowledge that, if we fail, we either go down as a free democracy or plunge into a second long, dragging, utterly impoverishing war, to the preparation of which will be postponed every hopeful activity in our public life. There is, indeed, a sense in which, while we accept the co-operation of Russia, and hope that our association with her will ultimately build up a common practice of liberty from the Thames to the Neva, we would gladly see the decisive enfranchising blow struck in the West. For that Germany might hate us the more, but beneath the chorus of official cursing there would run a murmured antiphonal blessing from millions of her workers, and from the majority of their leaders in the Socialist and Peoples' parties. For if the issue be settled in our favor, everything or many things will be settled too. The principle of international arbitration, definitely repelled by Germany as the dangerous rival of military force, and barely once resorted to by her since its establishment, will be re-affirmed. The existence of the small Latin, German, and Scandinavian States will be secure. The

general control of European policy will fall not to the Triple Entente, whose work will have been done, but to an understanding among the Powers, great and small. The "scrap of paper" will once more become a valid instrument; the devastating army, and the nought-respecting State behind it, will be seen for what they are, the dissolvent of civilized life and the enemy of the soul and hopes of man.

H. W. M.

"NEW TASKS" FOR AMERICA.

"We are the champions of peace and concord, and should be very jealous of this distinction, just now particularly, because it is our dearest hope that this character and reputation will presently, in God's providence, bring an opportunity such as has seldom been vouchsafed to any nation—an opportunity to counsel and obtain peace in the world, with reconciliation and healing and the settlement of many matters that have cooled and interrupted the friendship of nations."—*President Wilson.*

It is with some measure of hope that we turn from the spectacle of material and moral havoc, which is the Europe of to-day, to the one great civilized nation which stands peaceful, strong, and helpful for the future. For though President Wilson's Message is primarily addressed to the Congress and the people of America, his firm and eloquent recognition of the new position and responsibilities of his country and of the "new tasks" which he assumes it is willing to undertake, warrants, even impels us, to look to America to take a chief and initiative part in the pacification and reconstruction of a warring and a broken world. There are some among us to whom such a thought and such a promise appear the statement of a merely obvious duty, and America, after all, a merely "unprofitable servant" of humanity, for assuming it. But this is to ignore the true courage demanded of American statesmen to break away from the deepest and most settled principle of their past foreign policy, the total abstinence from intervention or participation in definitely European issues. It is, of course, true that within the last two decades the development of foreign trade, and armed adventures in the Pacific, have already broken down the narrower American conception of earlier times. Thoughtful Americans have long perceived that their country must in the future be prepared to take its full place as a member of the society of civilized nations. This feeling has not been primarily based either upon humanitarian sentiment of world-solidarity or upon the craving for world-power, but upon the recognition that the commercial and financial interests of America were already becoming so intimately intertwined with those of other nations as to make closer political relations inevitable. The shock imparted by the outbreak of this war to the trade and finance of the United States, the country furthest removed from the actual area of conflict, and the most self-reliant in its economic resources, has been an instructive lesson. It has proved that no barriers of ocean or of tariffs can avert the heavy suffering which war brings even to the most powerful and self-sufficient of neutral nations. The

lesson is of double and of contrary import. On the one hand, it is an incentive to set up stronger instruments of commercial defence. Part of the immediate trouble for America is due to the fact that she possesses no considerable mercantile marine. This defect the Government proposes to remedy by a measure enabling it to purchase vessels for transference to its flag (presumably as a first stage towards a larger policy of shipbuilding), in order to secure effective transport over the great ocean-roads under Government-owned lines of vessels. This step in practicable Socialism would have aroused excited controversy at any other time. Now the most gigantic expansions of State functions are everywhere accepted as natural and inevitable. But no development of American shipping can do more than abate the injuries which a great war affecting Europe must inflict upon American finance and industry.

It is, therefore, not only the high sentiments of humanity which prompt the championship of peace and concord—and, we will add, of liberty, for America cannot leave that out of account—which Mr. Wilson claims for her. It is a clear recognition of the new interests and the new risks which have come to America from her closer intercourse with other nations. It is better for Europeans to perceive and emphasize this note of enlightened national self-interest in the new American attitude than to overstress, as there is some tendency to do, the lofty disinterestedness and cosmopolitan philanthropy which also abounds, and which has even in the past impelled Americans to take a lead in the promotion of the cause of peace and international goodwill at The Hague. President Wilson is personally a powerful advocate of peace. So was his predecessor, and this is also true of their Foreign Secretaries. They earnestly desire, and they know their people do not less earnestly desire, to abstain from entering the competition in armaments and the material and moral risks which this policy engenders. It is this conviction and this sentiment that underlie alike the fixed determination to adhere to the forms and the spirit of neutrality during this conflict, and to engage actively in the work of settlement as soon as any favorable opportunity occurs. There we expect her to stop. We know where powerful American sympathies lie, and we think we know where they ought to and must lie. But a great neutral State, based on a talking democracy, has its own measure of its duty, and must necessarily observe it in its official language and declarations. Mr. Wilson has been claimed as a pro-German and a pro-Britisher, but we expect him to give no public hint to encourage either view. Any other line must produce the opposite effect upon American public opinion from that intended. Not less important, not only for America but for the warring world, is Mr. Wilson's resistance to the pressure for conscription which is being renewed in America, as here, by those who have lost all faith in the moral nature of man. Mr. Wilson's declaration that "we shall not turn America into an armed camp," and his adhesion to the voluntary system for defence, are guarantees of disinterestedness essential to the task of mediation which lies before him. What would be the use of America posing as "the champion of peace and

concord," seeking to bring the belligerents of Europe to a better mind, and to prevent that most disastrous of all settlements, a return to "the armed peace," if she had just advertised her own disbelief by herself adopting conscription and entering on the race for armaments?

America's first full open entrance into European politics in the capacity of peacemaker would be the assumption of a great historic rôle, as glorious for the people of America as it would be beneficial for the peoples of Europe. The assumption, and still more the successful performance, of so difficult a task would have the further virtue that it would make a profound appeal to the emotions and the imagination of the people of the United States. It would confirm them in their determination to labor for the building of an international habitation in which a new-comer may dwell in peace and goodwill among his fellows, co-operating with them, not only for the gains of free commercial intercourse, but for the better government of mankind, and the equal self-development of nations. For the one certain issue of this war is that America will emerge relatively far stronger than before, not only in material and financial resources, but in the part she will be able, and we hope consent, to take in the common counsels of the nations.

THE REVOLT OF THE SOLDIER'S WIFE.

THE best thing that has happened for a long time in England happened last week in Lancashire, at Preston. The soldiers' wives in that ancient town, once represented by Orator Hunt, have risen in revolt against the campaign of calumny and muddling by which a large number of people are amusing themselves in this crisis. There, as elsewhere, statements were made by persons occupying public positions, representing the soldiers' wives as wholly abandoned to drink and evil practices, and calling for repressive measures. The soldiers' wives promptly formed a committee to answer these charges, and to give expression to the indignation that they had provoked. These women were able to show that their indignation was shared by their husbands, and that this crusade for treating soldiers' wives as persons out on ticket-of-leave had discouraged recruiting, and the success with which they established the innocence of this great body of women in respect of the gravest charge brought against them may be judged by the statement of a director of the N.S.P.C.C., who reported that the inspectors of his society had given special attention to the homes of soldiers' wives, and had found no evidence at all of the alleged demoralisation. Confronted with this committee of soldiers' wives, the original accusers beat an inglorious retreat, and it was explained by one of them that his observations applied to other places than Preston. We hope that the spirit of the women of Preston will encourage women elsewhere to take the same steps to protect themselves.

We have here a real conflict of principle, as vital as any conflict that can be imagined, to the whole conception of democracy. What is happening can be told very simply. The war has revolutionized the lives of a large number of women; they lose the society of their husbands; they are exposed to great anxiety, and

they are naturally eager for news and for opportunities of discussion. In many cases the only place where they can hear and discuss the news is the public-house. If our life was organized on any rational principle, the public-house would be a kind of club where people could amuse themselves, sit down, read and discuss the papers, and find reasonable refreshment. Unfortunately, the power of a vested interest and the teaching of an extreme school have between them made the public-house in a town just the opposite of this, a place where nobody is welcome who is not drinking all the time, where people are expected to stand just because profits are made by the rapid sale of particular drinks to a continual stream of customers, and where the first object of such an institution as a public-house is entirely forgotten. If the magistrates who think, whenever they see a woman in the dock for drunkenness, that the public expects from them a pompous homily on the special wickedness of women, and, in particular, of soldiers' wives, had any sense of statesmanship they would point out that as the public-house is not a club, it ought to be made into one as quickly as possible, and that that is the first business of the State. It is not society that has a grievance against these women, but these women who have a grievance against society. If, again, moral suasion in companionship is necessary for women in this position, the people to give it are the soldiers' wives themselves, and such a committee as the Preston Committee might well be of great service in this way. They might, for example, run clubs of their own, co-operating with such bodies as the Women's Co-operative Guild, where women could receive advice and help.

The authorities seem resolved to act on just the contrary principle. They argue that just because these women are making a special sacrifice, the right thing is to put them into a special class, and to place them under the supervision of the police. The original circular has now been modified in tone, but those who thought from Mr. Baker's answer to Mr. Henderson that its essential principle was to be withdrawn, will find that they were profoundly mistaken. The capital fact about this system is that every soldier's wife finds herself indexed and registered at the police station. That is the reward which a woman receives whose husband goes to the front. We are not surprised that Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Anderson, and other Labor leaders are indignant that the insult should be offered to the wives of the men whom they have urged or desired to join the Army. But indignation is not confined to working men or working women. The Birmingham Citizens' Committee have declared their disapproval, a Liverpool Conservative paper has called for the repeal of the circular, and it is significant that the Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police has decided not to send the lists of soldiers' wives to any local police station.

The incident reveals a remarkable discrepancy between the feelings of the normal Briton and the spirit of our military administration. There has been prompt and steady response to the call for volunteers. Among the men who have joined the colors—including a quarter of a million trade unionists—there are very many who have

made a very considerable financial sacrifice. To many this stern duty has meant parting with wives and children, and running all the risks that a working-class home runs when the chief wage-earner leaves his established position in mine or workshop. The sacrifice is not only the soldier's; in some cases it is not chiefly his; even in classes where a man's home is secure if he dies, the wife is often facing the greater ordeal of the two. The ordinary citizen, then, with some democratic feeling, looks with pride and sympathy on this great army of men, marching as free men, "with one impulse sounding in their tramp and in their voices," compelled by no law, but summoned by the noblest call of conscience. He sees in it the spirit of British working-men and working-women—men and women alike facing sorrow, the hazards of the doubtful future—their passion for freedom, their consciousness of an inheritance, their sense of the responsibilities of a great nation to the greatest of causes. For him this is a moving and inspiring spectacle, and he likes to think that the Briton of the ages to come will dwell on it with pride, learning from this in what temper we went to war, and what kind of fellowship illumined, if only for one moment, the cold horizon of our common life.

But the War Office, he finds, is quite untouched by the democratic sympathies that spring from the great common tragedy that brings death to rich and poor alike for a common cause. No fact will stand out more conspicuously in the history of the treatment of this great moment than the fact that the wife of every common soldier in the war was branded with this cruel stigma. The chief fear that haunts the mind of the authors of this circular is the fear that haunted the minds of Ministers in the French War, that some people who are poor may find themselves with more money than they can spend with prudence. The money happens to be the wage earned by the husband, though the War Office cannot apparently understand that. There are laws to punish drunkenness; there are laws to punish neglect of children. But that is not enough, so they announce to the world that in this supreme crisis, when men and women seemed to be thinking of how they could serve their country, it was found necessary to put the policeman outside every soldier's home. What a disillusioning chill would come over us as we read of the French patriots marching to Valmy singing the "Marseillaise," if we learnt that their wives, instead of sharing in this passionate struggle, had been handed over to the police!

The motive of this policy is not cruelty. It is in fact kindness, but a kindness which becomes the most wounding harshness, the kindness of a superior class that is devoid of imagination, the condescending injustice of authority that will give everything but what is due. The officials who are responsible for this say, and doubtless with justice, that they are only thinking of the good of the women themselves. The man who thinks of other people's good is often unable to think of other people's rights or of other people's feelings. In Berlin a powerful military civilization has been established on the depreciation of human dignity and the rights of men and women. But as the British people are engaged

in a life-and-death struggle with that spirit, they may fairly demand from their Government that this circular shall be withdrawn, and that soldiers and soldiers' wives shall receive their wages without this officious inquisition.

THE GERMAN RUSH TO THE EAST.

WE are all of us inclined, as this war proceeds, to chalk upon our mental tablets a running score of the current losses and gains. The naval victory in the South Atlantic, and such a success as the unexpected Serbian victory, are gladly reckoned to one side of the account, while the Russian defeat at Lodz goes down upon the other. It is a rather empirical method of reckoning, and the sum is, unluckily, very far from balancing. The decision in this war must be on land, and that for the somewhat paradoxical reason that our command of the seas has never been in question. All that has happened has only been so much incident to confirm it and illustrate it. The all-important fact at sea is that the German merchant flag has absolutely disappeared from it, that our own supplies have never been interrupted, that we can impose a rigid observance of the rules of contraband upon neutrals, that we can ourselves import military material, that our troops can come and go at will over all the world's seas, and, above all, that we are secure from invasion. The command of the seas in this absolute sense has never been in dispute, and such incidents as the destruction of the "Emden" and the victory in the South Atlantic are only illustrations of the theme. We derived from our sea-power the maximum of advantage in the first week of the war, when our troops began to cross to France, and to the end we may reckon on the repetition and accumulation of the same advantage. For that reason an incident like this week's battle is in itself of secondary importance.

This almost passive power, so pervasive, so immense in its consequences, need not rest on actual fighting. It rests on the ability to fight and the certainty of victory. That ability has been demonstrated on a small scale, and it is conceivable that no great naval battle will be required to confirm it. What is striking and reassuring about this success, is the rapidity with which it has been organized. When the inadequate little squadron under Admiral Cradock was overwhelmed by heavier guns off the coast of Chile, Admiral Sturdee was in London. He has steamed 7,000 miles, located the enemy, brought him to an engagement, and destroyed him by no means negligible squadron, in a bare five weeks. The weakening of the enemy's forces, and the removal of an appreciable menace to our commerce, are real gains. What is of still greater moment is the demonstration that our command of the sea rests on an unquestionable ability to compel victory. This is only the fourth naval battle in this strange war (Heligoland, Chile, the Falklands, the Black Sea), and none of them has brought large forces into play. The slowness of the actual fighting is itself a proof that our command of the sea has been literally above challenge. The development of the submarine, and the new device of fortifying the sea with mines, have been interesting and menacing novelties in

this war. But they have left untouched the supremacy which depends on an overwhelming superiority in fighting power.

If we are entitled to remind ourselves of the fortunate consequences that flow from sea-power, we must frankly face the fact that Russia's arms are not prospering in the East. The third invasion of Poland is probably being made in greater force than those which preceded it; it is being pushed with more resolution, against more determined opposition, and it seems to have been planned with greater strategical skill. What the Germans are doing this time is to make an adequate use of the disadvantages which the Polish salient imposes on the Russian defence. The Russians are hampered by their bad communications, and they are engaged with a formidable foe, but above all they are fighting against geography. Poland juts out like a great blunt wedge into German and Austrian territory. It is vulnerable from north and west and south, so that the problem for German strategy is merely to use the ready-made advantages of their geographical position. Poland was made to be "turned," and it is being turned. The Russians will never be secure in it, until they have cleared their flanks in East Prussia as well as in Galicia, and they are still suffering to-day from the destruction of Samsonoff's army at Tannenberg, in the first attempt to occupy East Prussia. The second invasion of Poland, when Warsaw was so nearly taken, brought four German and Austrian armies into the field. It was based on an extremely faulty plan. The northern army struck its blow too far to the north-east, and even if it had not been repulsed, was much too distant from the main columns to combine effectively with their movements. The central column, which nearly got to Warsaw, was exposed to a flanking movement on its left. These two mistakes have been avoided in the present dispositions. The downward stroke from East Prussia has taken a shorter road, *via* Mlawa, and is near enough to the route of the other columns to afford them support. The main column (with its front on the line Lowitz-Lodz) which came down diagonally from Thorn, is not exposed to the risk of a turning move, because its left rests on the broad obstacle of the Vistula. The third column moving from west to east (Kalisz—Sieradz—Petrokow) protects its right. These three columns, which have between them, after very heavy fighting, inflicted a severe defeat on the Russians, are executing a formidable converging movement, which evidently has Warsaw for its objective. Nor is this the whole of the immense combined operation. We have heard nothing of an advance in Southern Poland, but a Russian telegram rejoices because two German ammunition trains have collided and exploded "in the government of Kielce." That seems to imply a fourth German line of advance from the Czenstochowa positions, perhaps by the railway which connects Königshütte on the German frontier with Kielce. A fifth mixed Austro-German force is trying to turn the Russian army before Cracow, and though one of its component corps has been checked, it is quite clear that this movement as a whole continues.

It is not easy to make an assured use of the meagre and contradictory telegrams in order to estimate the real

significance and prospects of this massive and energetic German advance. It may again relieve Cracow. It may again threaten Warsaw, and the converging movement down from Mlawa and up from Lodz looks to us more formidable and less risky than the dispositions of the second invasion. It has already relieved the pressure on East Prussia at one point (Mlawa-Soldau), and may affect it also at the eastern extremity. It has, at the least, delayed any prospect of a serious Russian offensive against Germany. The fall of Lodz is not in itself an event of much military importance, but it does underline rather decisively the failure of the high hopes which the Russians had formed of turning this German invasion into a disaster. Some reasons for the slow and precarious development of the Russian power we know, and others we can divine. The disadvantage of the Polish salient is one of them, and the bad Russian system of communications is another. Much, too, may be set down to the fact that the German armies are composed of men trained in the habits of industrial life, to combined activity, and to the use of mechanism. The Russian army is composed of peasants, and must suffer from their illiteracy and the primitiveness of their civilization. But the problem of problems is to explain why Russian numbers do not tell. The Empire possesses seven or eight millions of trained soldiers without calling up the middle-aged men and the youths, as all the other belligerent Powers are doing. The Germans had in the east at the end of November about 800,000 men, mainly of the second and third lines, and the Austrians probably slightly fewer. The six new corps, said to have been transferred from the west, can hardly amount to their full 240,000 men. All told, the Austro-German armies in Poland and Galicia must be considerably less than two million men. It is possible that the Russians cannot yet equip more than half their available strength, and that owing to defective communications, they have difficulty in provisioning those who are in the fighting-line. Certain it is that they cannot yet make an effective use of their numerical superiority. When the ice comes they may improve.

It is clear that we cannot expect any early relief in the west from a decisive Russian success. The immediate question is whether the temptation which now beckons the Germans to play for a big victory in the east may not have the same effect. They have come near scoring a large success in Poland. One can readily imagine the debate that must go on daily at the General Staff. "If only we dare spare a few more first-line corps, what is there to stop us? If Lodz, why not Warsaw? We withdrew six corps from the west, and nothing serious happened, why not make the six, seven, eight, ten? Italy, Roumania, Bulgaria are all watching us, and the two last are watching the east rather than the west. We need a victory there, and it can be won, if only we dare move the men." It might really be good politics, if not good strategy, to risk something in the west for the sake of drama in the east. In that way the opportunity of the Western Allies may arrive sooner than most of us had expected. It is solely a problem of numbers. The forces along the lines in the

western field are already less heavily disproportioned than they have been since the war began. Another German transfer of a few corps to clinch the beckoning success in the east, another big effort by the Allies to bring up reserves of men and ammunition, and it might be possible at some point to begin in earnest the costly but inevitable task of breaking through the German lines.

A London Diary.

OUR optimistic journalism always puts the public in advance of the military facts, and has made it see the Russian army in Breslau months before that or any similar event was physically possible. The Russians have had two difficulties. Their transport was bad; and their staff work could not, in the nature of things, equal that of the Germans. The troops have been good, and their numbers enormous; and so have been the general military conceptions. But these latter have not been carried out in the clock-work fashion which goes with the German system and habit of mind and with fifty years' concentration of hard brain-workers on military methods and objects. Nevertheless, these critics are not really pessimistic. The Russian machine is slow, but this time it is not corrupt, and is not, on its own plane of efficiency, ill-handled. Moreover, it should soon attain one marked superiority over the Germans. The winter in Poland this year has been late, and the Russians' excellent sledge-transport not yet available. When the extreme cold sets in the mobility of the defending armies should be increased, and that of the Germans reduced.

I DOUBT whether the public have any adequate idea of the spirit in which the call for recruits has been answered in many industrial districts. It is very far from the fact that this reply is a measure of falling trade. This might be said of one or two districts. But not of Manchester, where trade is reviving and the men still pour in to the new battalions. Not of the Durham mining centres, where collieries have been closed through the loss of soldier-workers. Not of the Welsh tin-plate industry, which is full of orders and where no rise of wages can stop the flowing away from works going at high pressure. It is not for lack of inducement that men are leaving; £7, £8, even £10 a week have been offered and refused. It is foolish to deny this spirit; it is rather worse to discourage it by meanness in the treatment of the dependants of these volunteers.

As the casualty lists are showing, soldiering still runs in families; brother follows brother into the ever-changing yet unyielding line. I heard the other day of a well-known public man, an ex-Member of Parliament, who, having given two of his sons to the New Army, thought he had done as much as could be expected. Not so his third son, a banker in a promising way of business in South America. When this young man came home and enlisted, it almost seemed that the infection could go no further. But the father had been an officer, first

in the Volunteers, and afterwards in the Territorials (possibly it was with him that the infection began), and he is now to be seen at the head of a newly formed battalion of a famous Scots regiment, which includes among its recruits—all in training for the front—a clergyman and a considerable number of undergraduates. I ought to add that one of the daughters of this family is likewise in training for the front (as a nurse), and that there is a fourth boy growing up, who will doubtless be ready if the war lasts long enough to take his place with those other children of Torquil, while Torquil himself cheerfully repeats his old slogan, "Another for Hector!"

NATIONAL and racial traits seem to have been brought out very strongly by the fighting in the trenches, though not always in the way that might have been predicted. An officer who has observed the different types at work tells me that almost from the outset the English soldier, notwithstanding his ardor in attack, has adapted himself with singular coolness to the conditions of modern siege-warfare. He settles down quite stolidly in his trench, spends the time writing letters, smoking when permissible, and generally in trying to make his stay as endurable as he can. On the other hand, Indians, Irish, and Scots are alike in one respect, or, rather, were so at first, when they all chafed against the tedium of waiting to be shot, and were difficult to restrain when seized by one of their "Up-Guards-and-at-'em!" impulses. I gather, however, that the English method has now become standardised.

LORD ABERDEEN's resignation of the Irish Viceroyalty marks the end of a piece of Anglo-Irish history, if, in effect it does not signal the end of the viceregal office itself. Lord and Lady Aberdeen's real work in Ireland was achieved in the early days of Home Rule rather than in the later. They could not reconcile Irish Unionism on the one hand, or give Nationalism a place in the little world of the Castle on the other. But they could, and did, energetically pursue the economic and social work which has been the beginning of the slow and difficult business of a political reconciliation. Lady Aberdeen's part in this healing process will have its full reward later on, in the days when we can begin to talk of a full Irish settlement. Gratitude for her services to the physical well-being of Irish men and women need hardly be postponed so long.

SIR JOHN SIMON's eulogy of the wisdom of the Censorship would be read with more acceptance if it furnished fewer examples of its innocence. Take the American interview with Lord Kitchener. It was passed for the press under, I am told, the historic formula, "Licensed to print." Anyone who had ever spoken to Lord Kitchener must have known that its Ciceronian sentences were none of his, and that this prophecy of a three years' war was the one thing which he would not be expected to say in public. Was the proof, therefore, submitted to him? And if it was, did he pass it on one day in order to repudiate it the next? And if it was not so submitted, why was the "Times" allowed to print it?

SIR DAVID BRYNMOR JONES's retirement is a loss to the House of Commons, which is not too rich in men of his great and varied accomplishment. Sir David was a scholar, a lawyer of nearly the first class, and he made a spirited and skilful leader of Welsh Nationalism. His best gifts, perhaps, were given to the House as a Chairman of Commissions and Committees. In this work he excelled, for he had penetration, a conciliatory and charming address, and the kind of skill in handling men which comes of fine judgment and knowledge of the world.

Now and then war exhibits a dreadful ironic symbolism of its own. A French observer of the battlefield on the Marne tells me that he saw a Frenchman and a German lying together, apparently in the act of exchanging a hand-shake. Coming nearer, he found that each man had bayoneted the other, and had fallen in a death-embrace which mimicked the pose of greeting friends.

On the other hand, what a crowd of stories to illustrate the comradeship of the trenches! Here is one which I glean from a Swedish paper. A hare ran across the space between the trenches. A hundred rifles were levelled at it. The Germans claimed the kill, and one of their soldiers walked (unmolested) from the trenches, picked up the hare, and carried it to the English line, to barter it away for tobacco, and return in safety with his prize.

A WAYFARER.

Life and Letters.

PRISONERS OF WAR.

Doc, says the proverb, does not eat dog, but man has distinguished himself from the rest of the animal kingdom by destroying his own species. War was among the very earliest of his achievements, and in the art of killing each other, men have never ceased to progress. Their success in thought, in literature, in building, music, and manufacture, has been considerable, but so is their success in the destruction of human life. To this all other arts have contributed, and in subservience to this some of them have found a high development. Mathematics and mechanics are the miracles of human understanding, and by their aid man, with the object of shortening life, has devised enormous iron ships that weigh thousands of tons, and yet will float and pass through the waves almost as rapidly as a dolphin. With the same object in view he has devised other ships that live under water almost as long as a whale without taking breath; contrivances that fly through the air almost as securely as an albatross; and explosives that fling cases crammed with other explosives for a distance of ten miles, though the cases are five feet long and weigh three-quarters of a ton. In the last mentioned art of deadly projectiles man is incomparable among living things.

But while man's cleverness has been most definitely displayed in the construction of death-dealing implements, and his marvellous progress in this direction astonishingly accelerated in proportion to the advance of his general civilization, his devotion to the other arts is

largely inspired by the same destructive purpose. His love of splendid colors, which he shares with many birds, the baboon, and gold fish, he has till quite recently exercised upon the trappings of death, such as banners, glittering and inlaid armor, plumes, and uniforms of scarlet and gold. These encouragements to slaughter he still preserves for religious festivals and national displays, though he discards them as involving danger to himself when he is out killing. Music he possesses in common with many insects, birds, and perhaps also with cats; but though, like them, he frequently uses it to express the reproductive emotions, he has often obtained its finest results in marches, war songs, or in celebration of victories. The keeping of records as an aid to memory of the past appears to be a special attribute of man. Other living things seem indifferent to the history of their race and to retain no knowledge of it, beyond an unconscious "race-memory" which may be the origin of "instinct." It was to be expected, therefore, that man would employ his special attribute specially to suit his peculiar taste. And so we find it. A good deal of history and some of the finest imaginative literature (except in so far as, like music, it voices the converse or reproductive emotion) are occupied with the celebration of mankind's slaughter.

Yet even here one may notice certain elements of restraint placed upon this very powerful and pervading passion. One may instance the treatment of captives, suggested by Mr. Tighe Hopkins in his small volume on "Prisoners of War" (Simpkin, Marshall). Mr. Hopkins is known as a student of history, and especially of prisons and prison-life. The presence of thousands of German captives among us has now turned his attention to a class of prisoners who are not criminal. Nearly all prisoners would say that their present unhappy position was due to no fault of their own. Hardly anyone imagines that his punishment by God or man in reality matches the crime. One is conscious of so much more good than evil in oneself that an offence against law or usage appears a mere episode, a kind of accident easily explained, and that is why the sympathetic Russian peasant uses the word "unfortunates," not for prostitutes particularly, but for all offenders. Prisoners of war, however, can plead their innocence with even more justification. Their position really is due to no fault of their own. Their punishment cannot match their crime, for they are not criminal. They are truly "unfortunates," if any are. Or, if charged with breaking the Sixth Commandment, they can plead that in war time they sin in common with nearly all the world. For the Commandment is always broken by mankind, not only with impunity, but with honor, and has certainly been broken by their captors.

What is to be done, then, with prisoners who are obviously not criminals, and, indeed, stand, with regard to crime, exactly in the same position as their gaolers? The victors in ancient wars solved the difficulty by killing all prisoners of war together with the whole conquered population, except such as might serve for concubines or slaves. That was a rough and ready method. But it was pursued, not only by the Israelites and their neighboring contemporaries, but by the Greeks, even during the brief period of their noblest development. We remember the massacre of Plataeans by Sparta, of Melians by Athens, and the pitiful fate of the Athenian prisoners in Syracuse. The interesting debate in Athens upon the treatment of Mytilene, and the reversal of the first decree ordering the indiscriminate slaughter of all males and the enslavement of women and children, seem to show some signs of compunction or grace. But the

primitive solution of general death or slavery was still usually maintained; and though Greece sometimes accepted ransom, and Rome admitted exchange of prisoners with Carthage, the captives of Rome were executed after the triumph, Jugurtha was starved to death, and even the most merciful Roman generals, such as Caesar, put his most distinguished prisoners to death, and sold the rest into slavery. Cicero, the typical man of culture, observes that the conquest of Britain was hardly worth while, as there was nothing to be made out of the island except the price of slaves.

The Middle Ages were no improvement on the Classic. In point of cruelty they probably deteriorated. Mr. Hopkins notices the destruction of Milan by Barbarossa, the blinding of 15,000 Bulgarian prisoners by Basil II., the hideous massacre of the Saracens in Jerusalem by the Crusaders about eighty years later, the incredible slaughtering of Tamerlane, the wholesale drowning of English prisoners under Charles VII. in France, the loathsome sentence passed on William Wallace and other political prisoners in England, the habit both in England, France, and Tartary of cooping up prisoners in cages, and sometimes exhibiting them, like eagles at the Zoo (Edward I. especially ordered a cage of strong lattice and iron for the Countess of Buchan, because she claimed the hereditary right of crowning Bruce at Scone). But enough of such records!

Mr. Hopkins passes rapidly to the twenty years of Napoleonic war, when, for the first time, and, up to the present year, for the last also, this country had to provide for prisoners of war in large quantities. During the second ten years of the war, Mr. Hopkins tells us, we had 120,000 French prisoners on our hands, of whom 10,000 died, 18,000 were exchanged, and the remainder finally released. For the whole war we may, therefore, probably estimate nearly 200,000, and all those had to be housed, fed, clothed, and, as far as possible, kept in health.

The first prison was built at Norman Cross, near Huntingdon. Being almost entirely of wood, it has disappeared, but you may still find a fragment of the outer brick wall. It included 42 acres, and was designed for a population of 8,000 men—prisoners and garrison together. It was arranged in four quadrangles, with stores, kitchens, and hospital. The prisoners slept on hammocks, in closely packed tiers. They were fed by contract for bread, beef, beer, butter, and cheese. A contemporary record says the Government spent £300,000 a year on the supplies. The clothing was a difficulty, because Napoleon neglected the prevailing rule that the prisoners' Government should supply it. As an act of humanity, therefore, the British Government, we are told, "clothed a certain number of the naked in a yellow suit, a grey or yellow cap, a yellow jacket, a red waistcoat, yellow trousers, a neckerchief, two shirts, two pairs of stockings, and one pair of shoes."

To supplement Norman Cross, the first prison on Dartmoor was erected in 1809. Prisons were also provided at Porchester, Plymouth, Falmouth, and Fort George. But still there was not room, and the unfortunate men were lodged in "the Hulks" at Thames' mouth. Wherever they were, whether crammed into old ships or crowded in prisons that were in fact male towns, the prisoners' life was wretched. In the writer's childhood, one might still see the straw-work and other ornaments with which the French tried to beguile the long years of isolation and enforced idleness. Cut off from all that gives decency, pleasure, and interest to life, a prisoner of war is at best a pitiable object. We cannot wonder that at Dartmoor one set of them, known as "Romans," adopted "a savage and bestial mode of life,

not as a relapse, but an organized proceeding, for the gratification of their appetites, and as a revolt against the trammels of social law." As we said, the country is now again faced with the same problem as our great-grandfathers. What is to be done with these innocent victims of man's ancient but unreasonable passion for death? Mr. Hopkins discusses the present situation of the 20,000 or so German prisoners (military and civil) in the various camps among us. But he suggests no remedy for this incarcerated innocence, except that the exchange of prisoners, which has become unusual in modern warfare, should be revived. That, certainly, would mitigate the cruel absurdity.

AN "ALLOCATOR'S" DAY.

THE work of an "allocator" is not unlike that of a sheep-dog. The business of a sheep-dog is to pick out one or more sheep from a whole flock and to drive them off as directed by the shepherd. Similarly, the business of an allocator is to pick out one or more Belgians and despatch them to the various hosts impatiently awaiting their arrival. But there the parallel ceases, for the sheep never dream of resisting the efforts of the dog, nor does the shepherd change his mind half-a-dozen times as to which sheep are to be picked out, whereas with the unfortunate allocator things are very different.

He, or rather she, for most allocators are ladies, receives several nice little pink cards, each representing an offer of hospitality; it may be a big county offer for fifty or one hundred people, or it may be a private person's offer for "a very nice family; must be clean and respectable," but not too grand to mind sleeping and living in a disused motor-garage; or it may be anything between the two. Sometimes the offers are marked "Urgent," which means that the hosts have applied six or eight weeks ago and are now beginning to get more than a little impatient; sometimes there is a note to the effect that the host wishes to see his family before it is despatched to him, which means that they will probably get very impatient before he can fix a time to come and see them, and the allocator will be unusually fortunate if she succeeds in bringing the two parties face to face. Occasionally, when the nice family is found, and labelled, and the date of their departure is arranged, after lengthy explanations and assurances that the journey will not include a sea voyage, that they are not being sent to an institution, nor to a place where nobody speaks French, nor will they be expected to pay anything (this last very important), the host will wire at the last minute to say that he has found another family which he likes better, or that his neighborhood has just been made a proscribed area, and then the work of allocation has to be done all over again, to say nothing of sympathizing with and pacifying the unfortunate family left in the lurch.

Then the nice county offers for fifty or one hundred people are not always so simple to deal with as they appear at first sight. The people must consist of various families—say, one of seven persons, another of six, two more of five, &c., &c.—and some must be peasants, some working-class, and some tradesmen. Besides this, each family has to be labelled differently, and though nominally one party, they may have to be sent by two or three different lines, to four or five different stations, till the allocator, who, it must be remembered, works subject to incessant interruptions and inquiries, feels her brain whirl with the effort of fitting in the human pieces of her jig-saw puzzle. Then there are the inquiries, which range from the finding of a missing relative to the pro-

curing of a piece of soap; there are also the people who, having been allocated on Monday, return on Tuesday to say that nothing will induce them to go to their destination, or perhaps they will return with a little party of seven or eight friends from whom they refuse to be separated, and for whom they expect a place to be found at the last moment.

Such are some of the minor difficulties of allocation, but more serious ones also exist. It is not always easy to find a host for a poor woman who is paralysed, or for a man who suffers from epileptic fits, or to know what to do with a gentleman who is most pleasant and attractive when sober, but is apt to get excited and fling a knife at anyone when under the influence of drink. Then there are the people who feel sure they will find work if only they can be placed in London, and who have to be persuaded to accept hospitality at Glasgow, or the host who wishes for French-speaking peasants and has to be induced to take Flemish-speaking ones. Still more difficult is it to know what to do with the quantities of single men, clerks, obviously as unfit for soldiers as they are unwilling to join the army, young lads of fifteen to seventeen who have become separated from their families, and grubby unskilled laborers who are too old for military service.

But with all these drawbacks the work is fascinating. We arrive at the office each morning, at 10 a.m. (or 9.30, if business is brisk), full of hope and courage. Outside the big entrance gate stand three or four motor omnibuses, refugees are grouped about with their baggage; there are perambulators filled with oddments; pilgrim baskets of enormous size, solid yellow trunks with wooden battens, and bundles tied up in sheets and check-handkerchiefs. Two big parties are just going off, and, by some inspiration of the Evil One, it has been arranged to send the party for Chester and that for Chichester on the same day. Both names are alike to the refugees, both begin with a "Ch." The escorts are more than usually distracted, and matters are further complicated by a shortage of refugees; more than a dozen people have failed to turn up; is it Chichester or Chester which is to be thus mulcted? The despatch clerk (a Dutchman) is fairly bothered. The escorts are frankly wrangling. No self-respecting allocator could pass by indifferent to such a scene of conflict. A strict inspection of labels (which the escorts have been quite unable to decipher) shows that Chester is to be the chief victim, ten of her people are not forthcoming, Chichester is only minus four. At last they are off, and the allocator passes on, to learn that the Dublin party went off last night without a hitch; only six short out of a hundred, they had a hot supper at Euston and milk was provided for the babies on the journey. It is almost like receiving news of a victory. Later on the troubles of the day begin; Lady D.'s party has just started when a wire is received saying she cannot receive them owing to scarlet fever, and some one is hurriedly despatched to try and intercept them at Waterloo. An escort arrives for a party of twelve to be conducted to Weybridge, and no one has ever allocated refugees to that place. Mrs. F. calls personally to conduct the family she chose three days ago, and the family has mysteriously disappeared; great annoyance on the part of Mrs. F. and of the Head Allocator, not appreciably diminished when further inquiry proves that Mrs. F. had promised to fetch them yesterday afternoon and had finally requested them to be in readiness two hours before she intended to call for them. Meanwhile, the missing Chesterites come in to explain that they were only getting their baggage together, and appear much surprised that the party has gone without them. On

the top of all arrives a "roving allocator"; that is, a person instructed by a county committee to select and despatch fifty to one hundred people to a county centre. In this case the roving allocator is a cheerful young man who evidently feels capable of allocating two or three hundred people per hour, and regards the allocating committee with amused tolerance as a set of senile dodderers. He is despatched to make his selection, in charge of the Junior Assistant (as being more likely to command his respect), to prevent his kidnapping families intended for another destination. At the end of a couple of hours the Junior Assistant returns with a little packet of refugees' "cards"; and proceeds to make out their papers; the roving allocator has gone off to get transport. He returns soon after luncheon, seizes his papers and departs, the Junior Assistant going with him to help him collect his party. She returns to the office, a demure smile on her face; "How many"? asks the Head Allocator. "Sixty out of a hundred, including 1503," replies the Junior Assistant, placidly. "What! the lunatic"? exclaims the Head Allocator. "He *would* have him," returns the J. A., "he liked him particularly, said he was such a nice fellow; they went off, so to speak, hand-in-hand. After all, you know, we have no evidence that 1503 is a lunatic; we only find him rather talkative." The Junior Assistant is incorrigible, what she says is perfectly true; but we wonder how the county committee will enjoy our "rather talkative" 1503.

Then comes the clearing up, papers are collected, transport orders made out, letters and telegrams answered and filed. All the time refugees have been coming and going with inquiries. Now it is a distracted mother clutching tightly a little baby, while she explains that in the crowd on the quay embarking she has lost two other children of five and seven years old. Next a pretty young girl, her face swollen with crying, on the arm of an evidently adoring husband. He, somewhat shamefacedly, explains that his wife is much upset because she has lost not only her household goods, but even her luggage, including her Sunday frock. Happily this tragedy is more remediable, and we almost smile, as we promise her a new frock, which shall "be very becoming," and the gratitude of both husband and wife is infinitely touching. So they go on from requests for a postage stamp to inquiries of how to get married, and until at last we depart, long after office hours are supposed to be ended. Even as we cross the yard to the big gate, we are hailed—"Madame, madame!" "Mais qu'est-ce que c'est, Monsieur?" (somewhat wearily, I fear). "Un petit souvenir, Madame, c'est de Visé, voyez-vous; Visé, la première bataille, on l'a ramassé, dans le village," and a little pierced oval piece of metal is pressed upon us, not unpleasing. We return grateful thanks, evidently it is not only we who love to give. A hearty hand-shake, "Bon soir," and the Allocator's day is over.

THE KETTLE.

A RUSSIAN correspondent, writing of the mobilization, gave us the curious picture of Siberian recruits hurrying to the front, bringing with them their burnished copper kettles. It is a thing very difficult to imagine in this day of million-fold armies of ciphered files with regulation outfit, camp kitchens, and tinned rations. Its difficulty makes it all the more cherished. We love it and cling to it as we loved and clung to the trains of Russians from Archangel that thronged last August every mile of our English railways. With great reluctance we imagine those kettles being skinned from our Siberians' backs by

the needle eye of militarism. Surely we hope that some of them reached Georgievski, and there sang in steam from Polish water the oft-heard song of the hero's domestic hearth two thousand miles away. We should like to think that they contributed to the hot water in which von Hindenburg found himself on the Bzura, and if we could see a valiant Siberian winning the Tsar's premium for first arrival in Berlin, copper kettle in one hand and bayoneted rifle in the other, we should feel that the age of chivalry was not altogether gone.

Were there not copper kettles among the gifts that Homer's heroes exchanged on the plain of Troy? If there were not, there ought to have been. Macaulay in his story of Horatius said nothing of how

"On cloud-capped Fallerona
Hollow the peat sods burn
The first time in ten lustra
Hungry for Balbo's urn."

But the warriors of his catalogue fought on the wrong side. They were destined to be beaten, and were unworthy to be mentioned with the affectionate intimacy of such domestic detail. The vats of Tusculum were all very well for the wine-bibbing hordes of Tarquin. No poet would allow the Prussian to bring into the trenches anything more domestic than a thermos flask. Whether it be true or no, it agrees with the unities to bring in the Siberian soldier to redress the wrongs of Europe, carrying his copper kettle.

The vision of the soldiers of the Tsar coming thus humanely equipped to the rendezvous of death was becoming a little overlaid with the other impressions of this lurid kaleidoscope, and has been vividly revived by a passage in Mr. R. L. Gales's new book, "The Vanished Country Folk" (Simpkin, Marshall). Mr. Gales knows the country folk well, and loves them with something of a scholar's, something of a brother's, love. As "Curé de Campagne," he has the entry into many a home where the idea of "lares et penates" still has force. If that idea had to settle round one particular object rather than another, it might be wondered which that object would be. What is "the little graphic touch that makes the horrors of the workhouse clearer than pages of declamation could do?" It is the exile's lament for "his kettle and fireplace, his clock and cat." Says Mr. Gales:—

"Who does not see a cosy, intimate little room, with two old people in the cheerful warmth, with a ticking clock and a purring cat? Why should not all old people have such a hearthplace as their very own? Let us hope that Mr. Lloyd George may remain in power long enough to make all our workhouses as useless as ten-year-old Dreadnoughts."

How much more scientific is the warmth of the workhouse, with its radiators and well-fitting doors! How much more comfortable to have the clock wound by someone else, and our meals found at their right times without the trouble of watching the kettle or wondering what the next dish shall be! How much more economical the co-operative home than the multiplied labors and discomforts of cottage life! These, the supreme attractions of the workhouse, are its first and last condemnation. What the old folk long for is a smoky chimney, a purring cat, and a singing kettle.

All those who know Mr. Gales, and readers of THE NATION know him through many a striking article in "Life and Letters," expect to find in him a standing champion of the country poor. He is as sad as Goldsmith over the decay of country life and spirit, and his lot is cast among squarsons, who take everything very much for granted or are grotesquely blind to what is going on. One of them describes the awful housing conditions of

1870 (actually no worse than the worst of to-day), and labels the drift to the towns as "a moral revolution." The modern town has now sucked in or had pumped into it 70 per cent. of the population. It has taken the best, and left the country anæmic and sleepy. It would at least be thought that the population of our villages was now rooted and stable. Mr. Gales finds that its most unhappy characteristic is that it is "uprooted and drifting." It comes as a shock, but it is so, only too largely. In the present writer's village, the principal and only large farmer employs about six men. This year at Michaelmas three of them left, and their tied cottages were filled from a distance with fresh laborer-tenants engaged for the year. On quarter day, farm waggons can be seen everywhere carrying the households, numerous in *personnel* but meagre in furniture, some fresh and hopefully better bargain picked up by a farmer at some distant hiring "mop."

Life moves very slowly in the country. Mr. Gales tells the story of someone calling on a newcomer who had only been eleven years resident. "They may be nice people," said someone else, "but we don't rush in Rutland." The poor acclimatize scarcely more quickly. A newcomer from a few miles away is commonly spoken of for years as a "foreigner." One who has been in the writer's village for four years has been lately twice raided by the local constable on the off-chance that he might be a German. He is undoubtedly English. The farm hireling gets far from cosy in his new home by the time the year has run out, and then it is more likely that he has to move. We cannot tell why it is so. It sometimes seems as though men were brought from cheaper districts at a wage apparently fair, but actually below the current rate at the place they come to. In the book, a yardman was absent one Sunday when the master wanted his horse put in, and so he had to "uproot and drift." There are single-man drifters, too. A woman in Mr. Gales's parish took in four of them, nine people in all, in a house of two rooms. Shall we blame the woman who thus eked out an income of nine shillings a week? Says Mr. Gales: "The lodgers must live somewhere; their work is wanted, and they cannot lie out in the snow."

It is strange that folk should cling to a kettle that sings such doleful tunes as that. To live with nothing between oneself and starvation but a starvation wage, must be much like tossing on a raft, which most would gladly exchange for any solid deck. There are, of course, some who keep their own hearthfire from year to year, and from generation to generation. They mostly belong to the auxiliary trades of mason and carpenter. It is the peasant that is the true kettle-worshipper, and in our land there is no peasant save the "gentleman farmer." Love of home is in many cases but an instinct surviving from a time before the enclosure of the commons. The tramp loves his "billy," because the world is his hearthstone, or perhaps because his instinct dates further back, to the nomadic period. There is something precious in a kettle that has boiled in every county in Great Britain, as there is in a gladstone bag plastered with the labels of every hotel in Europe. But a higher and more useful love is that we have for the fire that on this very stone has warmed the family toes for a dozen generations. Such a hearth is worthy to send something better to a world war than Pte. 14870; it shall send the MacStandfast, of Craig Ellachie, and the world shall know that his verdict is against Prussianism. The motives of the Siberian peasant are, unfortunately, obscured by the fact that he comes to the war whether he wishes or no. In this war the Slav is attacked by the Teuton, and many things go to show that Russia fights willingly. Perhaps it is a strong omen

that she comes with the rifle of the Government in one hand and the domestic kettle in the other.

A short time ago, a ship, descending the Mersey, ran into a guard-post, which is there called a porpoise. A London journalist, finding the fact of one porpoise bald and uninteresting, wrote that she had run into a shoal of porpoises, and that one of the animals had "sustained" serious injuries. We have just learnt that among the Tartars a household of people, those who feed from one family pot, is called a "kettle." Can it be that the Siberians have been ordered to send one man from each kettle and that a correspondent added that touch about "burnished copper"? A pretty kettle of fish, indeed.

Letters from Abroad.

THE BRIBERY OF BELGIUM.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The German authorities are continuing their systematic attempts to disturb, and, if possible, destroy, the future of the Belgian people in the territories which they occupy. Along with the reign of terror, the Germans have organized throughout Belgium a system of deception and calumny. They are not content with adorning every public hoarding with grandiloquent bulletins of great victories; they try, by the most varied methods—through the little newspapers in their pay, through trumped-up letters from Belgian soldiers, and private conversations—to ridicule the "phantom government" of the Belgians, to discredit their military leaders, and to make the public believe the most odious slanders with reference to their sovereign. Every German soldier attached to the garrison of a Belgian town immediately becomes the conscious or unconscious agent of this propaganda, and his activity is reinforced by a throng of civil agents, who, even in private circles, carry on the work of scandalmongers and of political sycophants. Many of the most distinguished persons of Brussels and of Antwerp, ladies amongst them, already owe to these degraded beings severe military penalties, lasting for many months, for having, perhaps in some quiet corner of a tram, or round a billiard table, uttered some word inoffensive in itself, but displeasing to German pride. I need not tell you that all this policy has been futile. The most severe restrictions do not prevent the real facts from filtering through the zones of isolation established around Belgium; and isolation itself, so far from depressing, seems in a wonderful way to stimulate the Belgian people, and to inspire an indestructible confidence in a speedy deliverance.

But what calumny cannot do the Germans hope to do by bribery, and it is in dealing with the working classes, especially in the great towns, that they employ this weapon. For several weeks in Brussels they have been singing with siren voice of universal suffrage. Since the Government has left the country and is unable to help the population of the great centres, since all the political and administrative wheels are stopped, why, they say, should not the people have a new and regular representation, suited to the aspirations which it has cherished so long? In Germany there is a system based on universal suffrage. The government of his Teutonic Majesty declares itself ready to grant to the working population of Belgium the very administration for which it has vainly struggled and shed its blood for more than thirty years. They have even gone further. Special emissaries have come to Brussels to make this proposition to the Federation of Syndicalists and Socialists, to facilitate the supply of provisions to their members, to make the social laws recently voted by the Belgian Chamber, but not yet promulgated, immediately applicable, and to complete them by adapting to Belgian needs the more advanced Socialism of the German Empire. The Government of Berlin first asked a Socialist member of the Reichstag, whose name I cannot

reveal, to undertake this commission. When this invitation was declined, M. Puttman himself, Director-General of the Minister of Labor at Berlin, came, accompanied by his secretary, to present the mess of red pottage to the Belgian Socialists. He was received at Brussels by the following citizens: Huysmans, Deputy and Secretary-General of the International Socialist Bureau; Delporte, Deputy, Vandermissen and Martens, Federal Secretaries of the Socialist Syndicates, and it was M. Huysmans, who, in the name of the Syndicalists, addressed him thus:—

"We are of opinion that it is useless to think of regulating work at this moment, since there is no work in Belgium, and it is your Government which is responsible for that fact.

"Certainly, though there is no work, the question of food must still be considered. The Government is in a foreign land, and the local authorities are very weak in Belgium. The task of revictualing the people devolves upon the commune. Ask your military commanders, then, to give up their exactions for the future, and to return to us the surplus which they have taken.

"But, lastly, we have always learnt from the school of German Socialists only to value those social and political reforms which are won by a struggle. Liberties which have been conceded are worthless, and, therefore, we do not desire universal suffrage or any political protection which has not sprung from our political institutions nor from our own efforts."

M. Puttman saw it was no good, and promptly left.

Such conduct on the part of the Germans shows that complete absence of moral scruples and ignorance of the principles of honor which have always characterized the foreign policy of these ambitious parvenus. With all their diversity, they all follow a single aim—that of distorting and ruining, if possible, the future and the conscience of the Belgian people. But they will not succeed. Belgium is covered with ruins, but her moral existence is untouched. And whatever happens, she will not perish. She will not falter under oppression, and she will no more recoil from the slow martyrdom of famine and torture than she has done from the cannon of Krupp and the torches of the incendiaries.—Yours, &c.,

A BELGIAN DEPUTY.

Letters to the Editor.

"A TRAGEDY OF PRIDE."

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—An objective view of this war may not be attainable until we see it in retrospect; but, in the meanwhile, it is important to fix our record of the main historical events. In a eulogy of Russia's moderation on the eve of the war, you say, "She mobilized after Austria; she did not mobilize on the German frontier; she consented to maintain a waiting attitude while the Russo-Austrian conversations proceeded." I think the weight of evidence is against the first and second statements. Austria mobilized partially against Serbia early in the crisis, and had on July 31st, eight corps under arms, which, as Sir Edward Grey told Russia, was "not too great a number against 400,000 Serbians" (White Paper No. 110). Austria, according to our own White Paper, gave her order for a general mobilization only on August 1st (No. 127), as Germany also did. Even if you prefer to accept the date given in the French Yellow Book (July 31st), the Russian order was still in advance of the Austrian by some hours. Setting aside all rumors and suspicions of earlier preparations, the admitted official fact is that Russia had by the morning of July 30th mobilized (against Austria) in four out of twelve Governments. The decision to make the mobilization general was taken during the night of the 30th-31st. The mobilization orders were received even in distant Siberia as early as 4 a.m. on the morning of the 31st. (See Mr. Stephen Graham's evidence, cited in Mr. Price's invaluable "Diplomatic History of the War," p. 103.) The news of this general mobilization was known in Berlin before 2 p.m. on the 31st, for at that hour the Kaiser's telegram

of protest to the Tsar is dated in the German Denkschrift. Our White Paper reported the general mobilization in the earlier of two telegrams, dated St. Petersburg, July 31st. A Russian general mobilization, of course, included mobilization on the German frontier.

This fact is surely a capital element, in my judgment, of the diplomacy that made the war. Early in the crisis, Berlin told London and Paris, quite frankly, what would be for Germany a signal of war. She said that she could not keep the peace if Russia (already mobilizing against Austria) mobilized also against her. This warning was conveyed to Russia both by Britain and France, and our Ambassador twice pleaded with M. Sazonoff not to give Germany this provocation (White Paper, Nos. 17, 43, 44). In spite of the German warning and his Allies' advice, M. Sazonoff on this fatal night took the one step which he knew must precipitate war. He took it moreover, in spite of the Kaiser's offer of mediation and of Austria's consent to resume negotiations. You point out that he was still willing to negotiate and to preserve a "waiting attitude." But he meant to continue his mobilization (No. 120). At the end of a period of mediation, which must have been lengthy, if the whole facts of the Servian plot were to be investigated, Russia would have had her millions massed and ready on the German frontier. The Power which acted thus must surely share with Germany the direct guilt of this war. Nor can it be forgotten that Russia had encouraged Pan-Slavist schemes for the dismemberment of Austria, and early in 1912 formed the Serbo-Bulgarian Alliance, which was formally and in writing directed as definitely against Austria as against Turkey. It was not merely the Serajevo murders, nor yet the Bucharest Treaty which caused Austria to feel herself in danger, but Serbia's ambition to play the part of a second Piedmont.

France, as you point out, was blameless in this last hour of the crisis, and Sir Edward Grey, fertile and tireless in his proposals, was the one statesman who showed a European mind. But behind these efforts lay the automatic working of the Group System; it had its effect on the War Party of the Grand Dukes. In 1908, during the Bosnian crisis, Sir Edward Grey had said "definitely" (speech of August 3rd) that he would take no part in a war over a Balkan question. When this same Austro-Serbian Balkan question came up again in 1914, he said, on the contrary, that he would certainly be drawn in. The Entente had become in the interval a tighter military bond. There are some available records of the effect produced in Russia by our attitude. "The sailing of the British fleet from Portland," telegraphed Reuter from St. Petersburg on July 30th, "has created an immense impression . . . and has more than confirmed Russia's determination to stand to her guns." You may not have seen the intercepted dispatch from the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires, dated St. Petersburg, July 30th, which the German Government has published. He wrote:—

"To-day people in St. Petersburg are almost convinced, indeed have the assurance, that England will support France. This support counts immeasurably in the balance, and has contributed not a little to give the war party the upper hand."

If Britain and France, instead of pleading with M. Sazonoff not to mobilize against Germany, had said bluntly that their support was conditional on his avoidance of all provocative steps, the war might have been averted.

It is, as you say, "a tragedy of pride." Each Power, in these final conversations, was smarting under a recent humiliation, and neither dared to show moderation. The German Government did not desire a universal war, but quite clearly it did want to score a truculent success, to demonstrate its might, to bring down its fist publicly and violently on the sensitive lever of the Balance of Power. Its state of mind is described with masterly psychology in the French Yellow Book (pp. 13, 14). The Agadir crisis, when Germany had seemed to recoil before the open menace of the Guildhall speech, had left her resentful at "a national humiliation." Was a favorable bargain over the French Congo, valuable only to French financiers, worth that result? Russia, in her turn, had yielded in 1908 to a German threat, and had to listen to the Kaiser's boastful and triumphant speech about his appearance in "shining armor." Neither could afford to yield again. The evil past of these ten years of armed

rivalry and colonial expansion, of balanced power and unbalanced pride, has taken its revenge upon us all.

I have ventured to dwell on some aspects of the past, because our view of the past must profoundly affect our conduct in the future. There are, and can be, among us no two opinions about Prussian militarism and its crime against Belgium; but that ought not to fill our entire mental horizon. At present, to the question, "What caused the unspeakable calamity of this war?" British public opinion answers, "German militarism," and prepares for the part of judge and executioner combined. The answer is too simple and too complacent. The direct causes were Prussian Militarism, Russian Pan-Slavism, French Nationalism, and the British dogma of the Balance of Power. The man who denies that the Allies have any share in this collapse of civilization is the enemy of a better future. For if we have nothing to repent, then clearly we have nothing to amend.—Yours, &c.,

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

Harmer Green, Welwyn.
December 10th, 1914.

[It is easy to make a case by quoting all the secondary considerations and omitting all the primary ones. The most serious anti-German facts are (1) the repeated refusal of Germany to initiate or tolerate any intervention in the Austro-Servian quarrel (which she knew must bring in Russia to save Serbia from extinction) her insistence on what the German Ambassador in Paris called the "utter impossibility of any mediation or conference" and (2) her interruption of the Austro-Russian "conversations"—at the moment when they had reached the point of Russia's acceptance of the Austrian suggestions—by her twelve hours' ultimatum to Russia. Obviously, the gravity of this is heightened by the Italian revelation that she and Austria concerted what Italy regarded as an almost identical plan against Serbia a year ago. Italy then decided, as she decided last July, that such action was not defensive but "aggressive," and, therefore, outside the scope of the Triple Alliance. Again, even if it were true that during the British intervention of last July Sir Edward Grey spoke for a slightly hardened *entente*, the cardinal fact is that he offered to go outside it in order to secure a moderate settlement. The proof of this appears in two despatches. The first is No. 39 in the Russian White Paper which records a message from the Russian *Chargé d'Affaires* at Berlin to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs:—

"Before my visit to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day, His Excellency had received the French Ambassador, who endeavored to induce him to accept the British proposal for action in favor of peace, such action to be taken simultaneously at St. Petersburg and at Vienna by Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and France. Cambon suggested that these Powers should give their advice to Vienna in the following terms: 'To abstain from all action which might aggravate the existing situation.' By adopting this vague formula, all mention of the necessity of refraining from invading Serbia might be avoided. Jagow refused point-blank to accept this suggestion in spite of the entreaties of the Ambassador, who emphasized, as a good feature of the suggestion, the mixed grouping of the Powers, thanks to which the opposition between the Alliance and the Entente—a matter of which Jagow himself had often complained—was avoided."

The second proof appears in despatch No. 111 of the British White Paper, which is a communication from Sir Edward Grey to Sir Edward Goschen:—

"I said to German Ambassador this morning that if Germany could get any reasonable proposal put forward which made it clear that Germany and Austria were striving to preserve European peace, and that Russia and France would be unreasonable if they rejected it, I would support it at St. Petersburg and Paris, and go to the length of saying that if Russia and France would not accept it His Majesty's Government would have nothing more to do with the consequences; but, otherwise, I told German Ambassador that if France became involved we should be drawn in."

What "reasonable" proposal did Germany ever put forward or suggest?

As to the dates of mobilization, we do not follow Mr. Brailsford. Does he seriously suggest that because the British White Paper has a despatch dated August 1st which states that a general mobilization of the Austrian Army and

Fleet had taken place, mobilization did not occur on July 31st? Beyond all doubt it occurred on that date. The sole question—and it is not of first-rate consequence—is whether it preceded or followed the Russian mobilization by a few hours. On this point the French Yellow Book affirms the precise contrary of Mr. Brailsford's statements. We quote two despatches, No. 115 and No. 118, dated July 31st. The first is from the French Ambassador in Vienna, and the second is from the French Ambassador in St. Petersburg:—

"General mobilization affecting all men from 19 to 42 years of age was decreed at an early hour this morning by the Austro-Hungarian Government."

* * * * *

"From imperative strategic reasons, the Russian Government, knowing that Germany was arming, could not further delay converting her partial mobilization into general mobilization."

There is, of course, an overwhelming body of evidence, internal and external, to the effect that the German mobilization began, and was brought up to a highly effective point, some days before the end of July. In any case, Austria is convicted of two aggressive steps—first, the ruthless ultimatum to Servia, reducing her to a dependent State; and, secondly, the initial mobilization.

That the general political system known as the Balance of Power was a factor making for war rather than for peace we cannot doubt. But no political system could have stood the strain of Germany's attempt to secure complete military and political predominance in Europe. Even though we assume that no Power was faultless, the question remains of where lies the predominant guilt. If that is not deemed to be Germany's, the story of the negotiations and of the desolation of Belgium has been written in vain.—Ed., NATION.]

THE RUSSIAN PROGRAMME IN FINLAND.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Writing in your last issue on the programme of legislative measures for Finland, published a few days ago in the Russian press, Mr. B. Lebedeff gives us the assurance "that in no case can this programme be considered as a final one." Such an assurance, if coming from an authoritative source, would no doubt be most welcome to all friends of the allied States which are fighting for the rights of small nationalities to free development.

Unfortunately, the reasons which Mr. B. Lebedeff gives for his assurance are far from convincing. "It has yet to be submitted," he says, "to the special Finnish Committee, and then it will be, in due course, laid before the Duma, without whose sanction it cannot become law." As a matter of fact, the Committee which elaborated the programme is the Finnish Committee, whose members have been specially appointed by the Tsar, and on that account the programme has already received the Imperial sanction. As to the necessity of submitting the programme to the Duma, let me remind Mr. Lebedeff that legislation by the Imperial Duma on Finnish affairs is no less a violation of the Constitution of Finland than the issue of administrative measures for Finland by the Russian Ministry. Apart from this, even under the Imperial laws, the Russian Executive may deem it necessary to submit the new programme to the Duma, but may also find it superfluous to do so for the time being. By Article 87 of the Russian Fundamental Laws, the Executive may, in exceptional circumstances, and when the Duma is not sitting, pass measures by "administrative order," and submit them to the Duma for a nominal sanction later on, within two months after the convocation of the next Duma. It is true that Article 2 of the same Fundamental Laws stipulates that Finland shall be exempted from the operation of those laws; but this stipulation, in defiance of the Finnish Constitution, was abolished *de facto* in 1910 by the Imperial Duma's legislation on Finnish affairs. There is one reason, omitted by Mr. Lebedeff—a much stronger reason—that makes one inclined to believe that the Russian Executive would recoil before immediately materializing the said programme of measures for the suppression of every trace of Finnish autonomy and citizenship. At a moment when Russia and her allies are waging a war unprecedented in history by its magnitude and the gravity of its issues, and when Germany,

by flourishing before the eyes of the Scandinavian nations the legend of Russian tyranny, is doing its utmost for the alienation of the sympathies of those neutral nations from the cause of the Allies, it seems almost unthinkable that any Government could conceive the idea of crushing the last liberties of the Finnish people, so closely connected in religion, culture, and economic interests with the Scandinavian nations. For this reason alone we should like to endorse Mr. B. Lebedeff's assurances. But there is no hiding the fact that, since the beginning of the war, prominent Finnish citizens, including the Speaker of the Finnish Diet, have been arrested in Finland and exiled to Siberia by "administrative order," and that Finnish newspapers have been suppressed by the same process, and the Finnish press forbidden to reproduce, or even to mention, the Manifesto to the Poles—in short, that many of the proposals of the "Programme" have, by this process of "administrative order," been already tentatively put into force.—Yours, &c.,

WM. T. GOODE.

(Hon. Sec. Anglo-Finnish Society.)

Graystoke Place, E.C.

December 8th, 1914.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The last number of THE NATION contains a letter from Mr. Lebedeff concerning the latest Russian aggression on the rights of Finland. He says that "the programme is purely academic." Permit me to point out that the very first sentence of the document states that "His Imperial Majesty has sanctioned" this programme. The programme itself is too long to be cited in full in your columns, but the complete document has been published in English in the "Manchester Guardian" of December 2nd. In 27 Articles it practically abolishes the last remnant of the autonomy of Finland. Point by point, every function of the administration of law in Finland regarding the civil service, education (including the University), police and gendarmerie, press and public meetings, finance and monetary system, post and telegraphs, railways, customs, savings-banks, land legislation, navigation laws, and copyright is transferred to the Imperial authority. And if this were not enough, there is an omnibus clause empowering the Imperial Government to extend to Finland "the rule of exceptional law."

It is true that the Russian Liberal press has endeavored to interpret this document much in the same way as Mr. Lebedeff, but I submit that these interpretations are only *pia desideria*, designed to evade the difficulties of the Russian censorship, and the real meaning of the document, sanctioned as it is by the Tsar while he and his Allies are officially fighting for the liberties of the small nations, is apparent on the face of it.

I need not speak of the crushing effect which the publication of this document has produced in Finland, at a time when even her enemies in Russia have been compelled to admit that the Finnish people has shown its perfect loyalty towards the Empire, and its readiness to bear its share of the burdens of the war. But it may be of interest to the English people to know that the impression has been not less deep amongst the Scandinavian countries, which see in the fate of Finland a threat against themselves, and which do not fail to point out the painful contrast between this programme of Russification and the promises of freedom and self-government given recently by the Grand Duke Nicholas, in the form of a manifesto to the Poles and Galicians.—Yours, &c.,

A SCANDINAVIAN.

December 7th, 1914.

THE BRITISH CASE.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The letter you printed last week from a Canadian reader is excellent alike in form and spirit, except for one unfortunate reservation at the end. Mr. Hunt writes: "In making this plea for a more generous instalment of intellectual tolerance, I do not mean that this should be overdone, encouraging too fine a balance and consequent indecision." This, I fear, really means: "Let us be critical so far as our case will bear criticism and no further," for critical thought is of the essence of real tolerance. It is

perhaps a natural attitude, but ought not, I think, to pass unchallenged. It is true that the present crisis calls for determined action, and it can hardly in fairness be asked of those who fight that they should do the thinking as well, though indeed the men in the field seem often to keep their heads clearer than those who stay at home. But it is not given to us all to fight; and we cannot afford to set a limit to the demands upon the thought of our writers, any more than upon the endurance of our soldiers and sailors. We have got to think with no less determination than we fight. Only through the severest honesty can we attain the spirit of intellectual seriousness that alone will fit us for the needs of the hour. If our cause is a good one it will bear thinking about; if not, it is neither worth thinking about nor fighting for.—Yours, &c.,

W. W. GREG.

Wimbledon, December 2nd, 1914.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S GREATNESS.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—There is much truth in the article entitled "The Lack of Greatness," but I find this more in what the writer affirms than in what he tentatively denies. I join him in crowning with greatness the men he names, with the sole exception of the Kaiser, and consideration of the Kaiser's character would perhaps lead to a more optimistic conclusion than that which your contributor draws.

The Kaiser has never suggested a "trace" of greatness. He has been talkative, flamboyant, boastful, and theatrical. This has made him notorious, but notoriety is not nobility. He has never been taken very seriously, for his speeches had nothing of the seriousness of the great nor the economy of strength. He came very near being the laughing-stock of Europe, and greatness can never suggest a smile. It was recognized that when he "dropped the Pilot" that it was the action of a "fool on horseback," and this old adage sums up fairly accurately his subsequent proceedings. He has never given the impression that there was in him infinite reservoirs of power or possibility, but rather that the man's position was far too big for the man. Surely this impression has been made indelible by every event leading up to and following the war. He publishes his decrees "with herald and trumpet," but without the faintest sort of personal authority.

The Great Man can be described more definitely than the writer imagines. Is he not the man who is great, in the scales of the infinite, from whom may be expected always something transcending the possible? The efficient men, the good men, the men of talent are measurable—they work within the orbit of conventional achievement. In statecraft they administer and legislate with thoroughness and skill, but exhaust themselves in the act. In theology they manifest vast scholarly and spiritual power, but there is nothing that dazzles or urges. Ecclesiastically, they work efficiently and skilfully an utterly antiquated machine; but the machine rules and subdues them. In no case are they greater than their circumstances. They never overleap ordinary and conventional boundaries. Judged by the standard thus briefly suggested, I should say none can deny the crown of greatness to the present Prime Minister. I am not one of his unqualified disciples, but he never fails to fill me with a sense of complete adequacy. His intellect and achievement are on the heroic scale. They surprise by their infinite force and dazzling clearness. The impossible was achieved when the Parliament Bill received the King's Assent. It is the greatest Parliamentary enactment since Pitt. He took such things as a coal strike at a stride. As a Master Statesman he has revolutionized the social life of the nation. His personality gives a sense of sufficiency in every emergency, and it is largely because of this the nation, in this crisis of its fate, can "sleep o' nights" and calmly do its "business as usual" by day. The Prime Minister is bigger than the stature of the men of this generation, and thus stands out essentially as a great man, and probably the greatest Prime Minister of our annals.—Yours, &c.,

S. PROUDFOOT.

Vicarage, North Somercotes, Lincs.

December 7th, 1914.

[Weak men or bad men may show a "trace" of greatness.—ED., NATION.]

PRACTICAL MYSTICISM.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—May I venture to point out that the interesting and sympathetic appreciation, in your last issue, of Miss Evelyn Underhill's new book just falls short of the complete presentment of her case for "Practical Mysticism"?

The chief value to the practical man of the mystic's experience lies in the fact that it leads to the highest development of his personal capacity, and gives the motive power for the fullest expression of himself. This Miss Underhill never fails to demonstrate (in the lives, for instance, of such world-reformers as Ignatius Loyola, Catherine of Siena, and George Fox). The mystic loses himself only to find himself. He is not a mere visionary, but a visionary inspired with the potentiality to make real the ideals he has grasped—to weave into his pattern in the web of life the glories of the vision he has seen. Perhaps I can best illustrate my meaning by quoting a passage from Miss Underhill's book on mysticism:—

"Our business, then, is to trace from its beginning a gradual and complete change in the equilibrium of the self. It is a change whereby that self turns from the unreal world of sense in which it is normally immersed, to first apprehend, then unite itself with Absolute Reality; finally, possessed by and wholly surrendered to their transcendent Life becomes a medium whereby the spiritual world is seen in a unique degree, operating directly in the world of sense. In other words, we are to see the human mind advance from the mere perception of phenomena, through the intuition—with occasional contact—of the Absolute under its aspect of Divine Transcendence, to the entire realization of, and union with, Absolute Life under the aspect of Divine Immanence. The completed mystical life, then, is more than intuitional: it is theopathic. In the old, frank language of the mystics, it is the *deified life*."

—Yours, &c.

J. L. M.

December 7th, 1914.

Poetry.

TO ALL OUR DEAD.

BETWEEN the heart and the lips we stay our words and remember
The long fight in the sodden fields and the ultimate
pledge they render
Whom we never forget; and afraid lest by chance we
betray and belie them
We call upon you that ride before, who rode lately by
them,
Lest we make you ashamed when you ride with the
valiant of all the earth
In the armies of God.

Lo! we call upon you to stand as sentinel over us,
You from our griefs set free while the shadows still cover
us
From the heart that fails and the heart that hates alike
deliver us
From the frenzy that stabs at the weak divide and dis-
sever us,
Keeping our faith as you kept the line, holding the
coward's cruel mind,
The final treason, afar.

Death for you is a sorrow endured, a thing past over;
They are facing it still, son and brother and lover;
They keep the line, and we keep our faith, and the soul
of a people lies between us.
From fear of phantoms, from a covetous dream stand
near and screen us.
Watch with us, watch through the days of war;—then,
pass to your place
With the armies of God.

LUCY MASTERMAN.

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Through the Brazilian Wilderness." By Theodore Roosevelt. (Murray. 18s. net.)
 "The Life of Andrew Martin Fairbairn." By W. B. Selbie. (Hodder & Stoughton. 12s. net.)
 "The Political Thought of Heinrich von Treitschke." By H. W. C. Davis. (Constable. 6s. net.)
 "A Playmate of Philip II.: Being the History of Don Martin of Aragon." By Lady Moreton. (Lane. 10s. 6d. net.)
 "The War and the Church, and Other Addresses." By Charles Gore. (Mowbray. 1s. 6d. net.)
 "Saint Clare of Assisi: Her Life and Legislation." By Ernest Gilliat-Smith. (Dent. 10s. 6d. net.)
 "And That Reminds Me." By Stanley W. Coxon. (Lane. 12s. 6d. net.)
 "From the Bottom Up: A Life Story." By Alexander Irvine. (Nash. 2s. 6d. net.)
 "Joking Apart." By the Hon. Mrs. Dowdall. (Duckworth. 6s. net.)
 "Prisoners of War." By Tighe Hopkins. (Simpkin, Marshall. 2s. net.)
 "Fighting in Flanders." By E. Alexander Powell. (Heinemann. 3s. 6d. net.)
 "Poems." By Robert Hugh Benson. (Burns & Oates. 2s. 6d. net.)
 "The Yellow Ticket and Other Stories." By Frank Harris. (Grant Richards. 6s.)
 "Arundel." By E. F. Benson. (Unwin. 6s.)

M. AUGUSTIN HAMON's study of Mr. Bernard Shaw has been translated into English by Dr. and Mrs. Eden Paul, and will be published shortly by Messrs. George Allen & Unwin under the title of "George Bernard Shaw: The Molière of the Twentieth Century." M. Hamon has also finished a course of lectures at the French Institute of the United Kingdom, dealing with the philosophy and functions of comedy from Aristophanes to the present day, which he intends to publish in book form. He is responsible for the French version of Mr. Shaw's play, and it may be news to some readers that Madame Réjane had "Pygmalion" in rehearsal just before war was declared. The translator informs me that the famous word caused him some searchings of heart, but he finally resolved on a French equivalent which was approved by Madame Réjane.

MR. FORREST REID, the author of "The Bracknells" and "Following Darkness," is at work on a critical study of Mr. W. B. Yeats for the series published by Mr. Martin Secker.

FIRST aid to readers submerged by the output of books and pamphlets on the war is offered in the shape of an annotated bibliography for their guidance, which has been compiled by Mr. F. W. T. Lange and Mr. W. T. Berry, of St. Bride's Library, and will be published by Messrs. Grafton. Among the fresh announcements on the subject of the war are Professor Vinogradoff's "The Russian Problem," to come from Messrs. Constable; Mr. Norman Angell's "Prussianism and its Destruction," a reprint of a section of "The Great Illusion" with a new preface, to be published by Mr. Heinemann; "The War and Democracy" by Dr. R. W. Seton-Watson, Mr. A. E. Zimmern, Mr. J. Dover Wilson, and Mr. Arthur Greenwood, to be issued by Messrs. Macmillan; and an historical survey of "German Culture, Past and Present" by Mr. E. Belfort Bax, to be published by Messrs. George Allen & Unwin.

Now that the question of Alsace-Lorraine is in the public mind, some French books on the subject deserve attention. M. G. Delahache's "L'Exode," published this year by Messrs. Hachette, gives a good account of the migration from Alsace-Lorraine which followed the cession of those provinces to Germany. M. Auguste Lalancé's "Mes Souvenirs, 1830-1914," published by Messrs. Berger-Levrault, contains the recollections of the Alsatian deputy whom Bismarck expelled from the Reichstag. Those who wish to understand popular feeling on the question will also be helped by a perusal of "Oncle Hansi's" "Mon Village," published some months ago by Messrs. Floury.

SEVERAL of the leading statesmen of the Restoration period are still without adequate biographies—Sir William Temple is a notable example—but a coming volume on "Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington" by Miss Violet Barbour leads us to hope that many of these gaps will not remain unfilled. Arlington was one of the most unscrupulous politicians in our history. According to Clarendon "he knew no more of the constitution and laws of England than he did of China, nor had he in truth a care or tenderness for Church or State," but his influence on Charles II. was considerable, and Temple thought him an attractive personality, possessing "the greatest skill of court and the best turns of art in particular conversation."

LITERATURE owes much to men whose main energies were given to the profession and practice of medicine, and it is fitting that "Physicians as Men of Letters" should be one of the topics in Dr. Stuart Chisholm's collection of essays, "Recreations of a Physician," just published by Messrs. Putnam. The roll of literary doctors is a long one, and Dr. Chisholm places at its head the names of Rabelais, Sir Thomas Browne, Arbuthnot, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, as men who, while eminent as physicians, achieved enduring fame as men of letters. Three of these names will find general acceptance, but the inclusion of Arbuthnot requires some defence. Dr. Chisholm claims that "the only sane, clear, virile mind, the only wholesome human heart, among those who are best described as the wits of Queen Anne's reign was John Arbuthnot." To Arbuthnot's character there is abundance of testimony, including that of Johnson and of Thackeray, but to the general reader he is now nothing more than a name. How many people have read "The History of John Bull" in spite of the fact that it endowed the Englishman with the nick-name on which he prides himself to-day? Surely, Dr. Chisholm could find a more representative name on a list that contains those of Smollett, Goldsmith, Cowley, Akenside, Garth, Blackmore, Sir Samuel Smiles, Charles Lever, John Brown, and Schiller.

THE distance that separates the medicine-man from the sovereign has not always been so great as it is to-day, and another of Dr. Chisholm's essays treats of "Royal Authors." From the days when Julian "stained the Imperial purple with an author's ink" to those of the Kaiser, kings have rivalled doctors in the pursuit of literature, though with far less success. Several of our own sovereigns have yielded to this ambition. Alfred was a translator, Elizabeth was proud of her English verses, and James I. attempted many literary forms but adorned none. Coming to more recent times, one may recall Disraeli's characteristic compliment to Queen Victoria—"Madam, we authors —." Oddly enough, Dr. Chisholm's survey of royal authors makes no mention of Frederick the Great. It is customary to sneer at Frederick's pretensions to authorship, and his attempts at French verse are intolerably dull, but several French critics since Voltaire have seen qualities to praise in Frederick's prose. Apparently, the only modern sovereign who has ventured into fiction is "Carmen Sylva," whose novels and short stories are known to a number of English readers.

ANOTHER of Dr. Chisholm's topics is "The Picaro in Fiction," an attractive subject on which several dull books have been written. Dr. Chisholm pays proper tribute to Hurtado de Mendoza's "Lazarillo de Tormes" which first launched the picaro into literature, but he reserves his highest praise for "Gil Blas." In this he follows no less an authority than Scott. "If there is anything like truth in Gray's opinion that to lie on a couch and read new novels was no bad idea of Paradise," wrote Scott, "how would that beatitude be enhanced could human genius afford us another Gil Blas?" Human genius has not accomplished this, but it has achieved a very colorable imitation in Lever's "Con Cregan," a novel that amazed its author by its success. Perhaps there is a special sympathy for the picaresque in the Irish temperament. Goldsmith had a large share of it, and Dr. Chisholm, like Thackeray, believes that one of the most engaging of the books that have never been written would be Goldsmith's narrative of his wanderings over the Continent of Europe. Here is a hint for some contemporary writer.

PENGUIN.

Reviews.

A CRITIC OF ENGLISH DRAMA.

"English Drama." By FELIX E. SCHELLING. Professor in the University of Pennsylvania. Channels of English Literature Series, (Dent. 5s. net.)

IN a series devoted to tracing the "Channels of English Literature," it would perhaps be unreasonable to look for criticism that should burst the banks of tradition and make a fresh channel for itself. Certainly, there is nothing of the sort to be found in Professor Schelling's learned, judicious, and pre-eminently "safe" compendium of English dramatic history. Professor Schelling knows his subject through and through. He is familiar, not only with the texts, but with the most recent results of archaeological and critical investigation. He is able to place things in their sequences and relations much more accurately than would have been possible twenty, or even ten, years ago. He gives us, in brief, a thoroughly competent and trustworthy small-scale map of the region he surveys. But his work is almost as schematic and abstract as a map. Everything is projected on one plane, without relief, without light and shade. Sequences and relations, as aforesaid, are accurately marked off; but proportions—no! Mr. Schelling accepts with perfect docility the scale of proportions established by the explorers of a hundred years ago, with Lamb at their head, and does not seem to suspect that it stands in need of radical revision.

It is surely time that this should be recognized, even in the high places of academic orthodoxy. The name of Charles Lamb is never to be mentioned without reverence and love; but a good critic of drama he was not. He never, as it were, got outside the Elizabethan convention, and therefore did not realize its limitations. The fundamental distinction between poetry and drama escaped him. He found in the plays he loved a great many striking and beautiful details, and he forgot that a fine passage does not make a fine play any more than a piece of delicate tracery makes a great cathedral. Nor was his taste, even in poetry, above suspicion, else friendship itself would scarcely have induced him to find the intolerable fustian of Sheridan Knowles inferior only to Shakespeare "in the clean passes of pathos." Yet in all essentials the Lamb valuation of Elizabethan drama holds the field to this day, as it certainly does in Mr. Schelling's volume. He admits indeed the existence of a good deal of dross among the Elizabethan ore. "It is," he says,

"vastly to the credit of the Elizabethan age that it was able so unerringly to choose between the plays of the henchmen of Henslowe, which it suffered to lie to a large extent unpublished, and the permanent dramas of Shakespeare and his greater fellows, which his contemporaries not only attended to applaud, but purchased for after reading in a remarkable number of editions."

It would be hypercritical to inquire how the worthlessness of the non-extant plays is ascertained. That may be pretty safely taken for granted. The mistake does not lie in assuming that most of what has perished was bad, but in acting on the principle that all that has survived must be more or less good. There are, of course, degrees. Rowley and Daborne are not placed on the same level as Jonson and Fletcher, to say nothing of Shakespeare. But even the minor writers are treated with a respect wholly disproportionate to their merits; while in regard to the major writers—men of real literary capacity—there is never a whisper of the essential truth that a great deal of their work is, dramatically, very poor stuff. We are not making this a reproach to Mr. Schelling in particular. He is as sane and discriminating in his judgments as any critic of his school. It is the whole school that is lacking in sense of proportion—the whole tradition that needs to be reconsidered. But the fact comes home to us the more clearly in this instance, because, in a supplementary chapter, Mr. Schelling brings his sketch of dramatic history down to our own time; and we cannot but contrast his dubious and perfunctory recognition of the drama of this century with his respectful study of the veriest trivialities and inanities of three hundred years ago.

Let us give one instance of this lack of proportion. Swinburne, in relation to the Elizabethans, was simply Lamb

with a megaphone; so it is not surprising that he should have set down Chapman's "All Fools" as "one of the most faultless examples of high comedy in the whole rich field of our Elizabethan drama." This estimate Mr. Schelling accepts without even its formal limitation, making Swinburne say point-blank that the play is "one of the best comedies in the language," and fully endorsing that judgment. Now, the intrigue of "All Fools" (founded on two Terentian plots) is an inextricable tangle of deceptions, duperies, and mendacities, without the smallest trace of verisimilitude or common sense. One character is drawn with a certain rude vigor, and there are some purple patches of verse; but, on the whole, the piece is as arid as it is extravagant. If a farce-writer of to-day were to produce a plot of such laborious senselessness, he would be told that he did not know the A B C of his own paltry trade. The plain truth is that "All Fools" belongs to a semi-barbarous phase of dramatic development. It is interesting historically, but its intrinsic and enduring worth is infinitesimal. When we find poets and professors lauding it as a masterpiece of "high comedy," we feel the justice of Sir Arthur Pinero's definition: "A comedy is a farce by a deceased author." It is no doubt very difficult to work out any common measure for Elizabethan, Restoration, and modern drama, but the attempt must be made if criticism is not to be a mere parroting of the enthusiasms of writers whose own dramatic practice sheds a startling light upon their theories.

Within the limits of the orthodox convention, Mr. Schelling's judgment is generally sound enough; but now and then we find it rather hard to follow him. Here is an amazing piece of Shakespeare-worship:—

"The repellent grossness of detail in certain scenes of 'Measure for Measure,' the poet found in his originals, Cinthio's novel, and Whetstone's English versions. These the fidelity of his art demanded that he retain."

Among the many excuses that have been alleged for Shakespeare's sins against our modern canons of propriety, this is surely the feeblest. In all other respects, he treated his originals with the utmost freedom; why on earth should "the fidelity of his art" have required him to reproduce their indecencies? Of Marlowe, Mr. Schelling says:—

"His was the poetry that fired the genius of Goethe, who sophisticated with modern brilliant philosophical speculation, a theme which was the product of an age of eternal and, dare we say it, of sounder theology than that of his own."

After this it is scarcely surprising to find Mr. Schelling devote two pages to vindicating Marlowe's memory from the accusation of atheism, and of denying the authority of the Scriptures. It is surely idle to doubt that Marlowe's religious opinions were somewhat in advance of his age, and equally idle to attempt to ascertain, from the obviously worthless documents, the precise extent of his heterodoxy. Mr. Schelling, as we see, is conscious of a certain daring in his confrontation of Goethe and Marlowe; but he manifests no such consciousness in declaring as a matter of course ("it cannot be denied") that Dryden's "Amphytrion" is superior to Molière's. This remark shows very clearly how the critic's judgment has been "subdued to what it works in, like the dyer's hand"; for it is difficult to see where Dryden surpasses Molière, except in coarseness and vulgarity.

"No assumption of former scholarship," says Mr. Schelling, "is more gratuitous than that which denies scenery to either the private or the public theatres of Elizabeth's time." It may be true that "former scholarship" overlooked one or two evidences of an experimental use of painted scenery in late Jacobean or Caroline days; but we see no reason to doubt that "former scholarship" had the right end of the stick and Mr. Schelling the wrong end. You cannot use pictorial scenery to any purpose without a proscenium, and it is absolutely certain that neither in the public nor the private theatres was a proscenium introduced before the Restoration. The inner stage, indeed—the recess at the back between the entrance-doors—had in effect a proscenium; and it is possible that perspective backings may have been occasionally used in this recess, just as Mr. Granville Barker, in his Elizabethan production of "The Dynasts," gives us, on the inner stage,

a more or less pictorial presentment of the death of Nelson and of Napoleon's abdication. But evidence of any such practice in Shakespeare's day is scanty and unconvincing. Mr. Schelling plainly misreads the passage from Dekker on which he relies. Dekker, addressing his typical boulder of the period says:—

"By sitting on the stage you have a sign'd patent to engrosse the whole commodity of Censure; may lawfully presume to be a Girder; and stand at the helme to steere the passage of scenes."

It is fantastic to take this as meaning "direct the shifting of scenery." On the face of it, and still more clearly when read in its context, it means that the self-appointed critic could, by applause or interruptions, make or mar the "scenes," the dramatic episodes, as they passed. The word "scene" occurs some forty times in Shakespeare, but never in the sense of stage-decoration; and we very much doubt if any authentic instance of its use in this sense can be produced before 1620 at the very earliest. The basic fact that the pre-Restoration stage was not pictorial is no "assumption of former scholarship," but a deduction from an overwhelming mass of evidence.

Mr. Schelling has been badly served by his proof-reader, and his text swarms with misprints. We are fain to put down to this lack of revision some very odd pieces of English which encounter us here and there. In the following sentence: "'The Lying Lover,' Steele's next comedy, owes considerable to 'Le Meneur' of Corneille," there is one very obvious misprint—and we hope there are two.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL BOY.

"A Schoolmaster's Apology." By CYRIL A. ALINGTON. (Longmans. 3s. 6d. net.)

MR. ALINGTON is, we are sure, an excellent schoolmaster, and he seems to us a first-rate type of the English schoolboy as well. Throughout this little volume of rapid thoughts we feel the atmosphere of the modesty, honesty, politeness, and cheerful stoicism which surrounds the public schools at their best. The author has been associated with public schools all his life (except for his years in Oxford, itself a collection of public schools), and he has known them always at their best. As boy and master, he was long at Eton, and one remembers the Eton rowing song which, in spite of its strain of peculiar melancholy, suddenly proclaims Eton as "the best of all possible schools." And when, a few years ago, Mr. Alington left Eton for Shrewsbury, he became the Headmaster of the most beautiful and, as all her sons would say, also the best of all schools. Her sons would say that, even those who knew her only in old days as the stern nursing mother of barbarians, whose savagery she tempered only by Greek.

So Mr. Alington's knowledge of public-school life is intimate and fine. He knows its shortcomings well enough; but, taking no pains, as he says, to avoid being misunderstood, he frankly states his conviction "that an English public school is the best instrument yet devised for making a decent citizen out of the average English boy." He goes further; he sees no sign that any other nation, from Germany to the United States, has solved its own particular problem better, and he quotes Mr. Geoffrey Drage as saying that "the best type of English public school boy goes through Europe like a Spartan through Greece in its degenerate days, and those who see him say, 'Good heavens! why are not our boys like that?'"

Certainly there is a Spartan quality about the type, and by "Spartan" we do not only mean hard and enduring, or abstemious. The word implies those finer qualities which Plato so greatly admired in Sparta—qualities described by Walter Pater in his "Plato and Platonism," the chapter called "Lacedæmon." Much, as in Sparta, is due to tradition—the secular tradition of "good form" and honorable behaviour that has slowly grown up and established itself since the Renaissance or before. The best of such approved tradition remains vital, though, as Mr. Alington shows in one of his brief chapters, an extraordinary change in public school life has made itself felt within the last twenty or thirty years. No institution, he says, has changed so much in the

past half-century, with the possible exception of the Church of England. He attributes this chiefly to the change of relationship between the boy and the master. "I feel sure," he writes, "that at almost every school now the average boy has a chance of finding a friend in a master in a way that was not common twenty years ago."

That brings us near the secret of all that is now best in our public schools. It is a force more powerful even than tradition. Mr. Alington reveals it when he speaks of "the paramount importance of personality in the work of teaching." No public school boy will question it. Subject and system, Montessori methods, Fröbel methods, and all the latest allurements to learning and short cuts to knowledge—without personality in the teacher they are sounding brass. Compared with the power of personality they are nothing. A master of great personality—such a man as Shrewsbury herself knew for many years, and Dulwich afterwards—will work like leaven in a school. Within a month his incalculable influence will be felt. Within a year it will have transformed the whole lump.

Apart from such personality, a public school may remain, as Bishop Creighton called it, a cross between a barrack and a workhouse. But when once personality is secured, subject, of course, goes for something, and Mr. Alington's frank and sensible observations on the choice and teaching of subjects will be welcomed by many a perplexed and hard-worked schoolmaster, tormented by parents and overwrought by successive brief generations of boys. The suggestions are often daring. To clear space in the terrible "curriculum" demanded by our educational torturers, Mr. Alington would abolish Algebra (except, of course, for obvious mathematicians) and French. In his sensible and light-hearted manner, he writes:—

"From Algebra, I, and countless others like me, have not only derived no benefit, but I have not even the shadow of a notion what benefit I was expected to derive."

And as to French, he tells the story:—

"When the present Headmaster of Eton entered on his post, he did me the honor to invite some advice. I told him that if he had any moral courage, he ought certainly to abolish French. His answer was, 'Now, it's a most amazing fact, but I was told that by a really clever man only yesterday.'"

In place of French or German, if any modern language must be attempted at school, he pleads for Italian, chiefly because Dante is greater literature than anything in French or German, and can be taught.

How essential that last qualification is! Believe a reviewer who once tried to teach English literature and was driven back upon Greek in despair. How deeply one who has tried can sympathize with the following passage! Speaking of the demand for English teaching, Mr. Alington writes:—

"I hope it is not insolent to suggest that one of the first results of the demand has been to provide some extra employment for the master primarily in charge of the games. He is known not to be a sound classic (though I personally believe in his teaching of grammar), and there have always been some qualms about letting him teach mathematics—but English! his own language!—that is a subject we may fairly give him. And so the poor man is confronted with what is without exception the hardest piece of work in the whole teaching profession."

Yes, the very hardest piece of work; but even of that Mr. Alington does not despair. He attacks it gaily. He would even encourage the boys to try English metre, and he gives some pretty fair specimens of the result. On the whole, he encourages debating too, though he recognizes the dangerous glory of such eloquence as he once heard from "the Brooklyn orator," who, speaking on population, began:—

"Our city, ladies and gentlemen, contains homes whose fecundity is the despair of the enemies of posterity."

The last part of the book is occupied with the discussion of spiritual teaching. It may not be profound theology, but it is all done in the same spirit of good sense or cheerful frankness, and criticism of the clerical mood is appeased by the following quotation:—

"The complaints against the clergy are of long standing, and of monotonous tenor. 'The Archbishop, because, as is usual with the clergy, he was pusillanimous

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and timid,' writes a chronicler of the Crusades, Richard of Devizes; 'King Charles was both dishonest and cowardly; he would have been better suited for the life of a clergyman,' writes a little schoolgirl of our own days—and it is hardly possible to doubt that so striking a coincidence has a basis in fact."

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We all know, of course, that one can easily have a fairy-tale without a fairy in it. But there are certain elements that a fairy-tale must have to be worthy of the name—one is dualism, and another metamorphosis. Both take us back to many old religions, notably the old Iranian creed, from which so huge a proportion of our Indo-European fairy-tales originally sprang. Whatever a fairy-tale's purpose or source, we look for a conflict between the spirits of good and evil, light and darkness (whether on man's behalf or no); and we look for the transmutation of all sorts of things, one into another—of human souls and faculties into animals, of matter into air, of places close at hand to places far away—and not of things only, but of ideas and qualities, a perpetual interflow everywhere of energy, of form, of life. When these things happen we call it a fairy-tale. If one recognizes this, one realizes why it is that "fée" should be an adjective capable of being applied to anything that possesses, or provokes, a consciousness of the universal communion—anything that is supposedly in touch with the "Fata," the universal destinies. Why not, then, apply it to the fairy-tale? Why not say that a fairy-tale is not necessarily a tale about fairies—for the fairies as a crowd are a terribly confused hotch-potch of fact and fancy—but a tale that is "fée," a tale that reflects, as dogma never can, but as art sometimes may, our dim fancies, dreams, hopes, as to the mysteries of the great organism of which this little world forms so infinitesimal a part?

It is this, in any case, that probably lies behind the enormous vogue of the fairy faith among cultivated folk to-day. There is a "new Gnosticism" very prevalent just now. There are any number of people who accept the "pretties" of every creed, and weave them into a general beauty-cult, in which fairydom figures largely. It is a vague sort of natural mysticism for the most part. Still, Nature is delightfully limitless. There is no "behind-the-scenes" to its landscape; no canvas at the back of the stars. To lose oneself in the sheer multitudinousness of natural analogies has the flattering semblance of profundity. To believe in the fairies—or passionately to pretend that one does—is soothing. It gives joy and comfort, a sense of superiority, with an ever-ready refuge in paradox. And who knows but there may be something in it! Does not science tell us that metamorphosis is happening, according to certain laws, always and everywhere? So the fairies, sprung from primeval religions, are becoming a religion of themselves in these latter days. Many of them, as we all know, are, in very fact, the gods grown old. They are becoming the gods grown young again.

On the other hand, there is an entirely opposite and distinct reason for the present fairy-tale vogue—namely, the practical development of specialized nursery literature. The reason why children like fairies is, of course, entirely different. It is just because the fairies that they hear about are far more active, sympathetic, and interesting than human beings. With children there is no question of religious con-

solation. They do not need it. Dualism and metamorphosis delight them because they afford conflict, variety, adventure, a dramatic appeal that humdrum human life cannot give. They do not want to see into the nature-depths. Stars and flowers are no more to them than their own toys and chattels—not so much, indeed. They like to imagine that animals talk just because it is much more fun that they should; and animal characters are much more obvious and contrasted than those of human beings. So we get every year this double, or indeed treble, stream of fairy-books—echoes of old religious myths and primitive animal-fables gathered by folk-lorists from all over the world; tender creations of symbol and analogy born of the wistful hopes of imaginative votaries of the modern fairy-cult; last, but not least either in quantity or quality, just lively stories of adventure for the children. Sometimes, of course, a story will serve all three purposes. Then it becomes immortal and universal, like "Cinderella," or "Beauty and the Beast," or "Jack and the Beanstalk." Sometimes it serves two purposes; sometimes one; sometimes none. Sometimes, especially among modern creative efforts, there is a confusion of appeal that might have been avoided by just a little recognition of the essential differences of fairy-tales.

Suppose, then, we analyze, in ever so superficial a fashion, this little cluster of fairy-tales, old and new. We shall find instances of each kind. Lady Margaret Sackville's original stories in "The Dream-Pedlar" are exceedingly charming examples of the modern fairy-cult. They tell of the consolation of nature-analogies to a highly-cultivated, sensitive, poetic, feminine temperament. Lady Margaret Sackville boldly claims to be "fée." "I've been to fairy land," she says in her dedicatory verses. In so far as this means that she has obviously felt in her own life a personal response to starlight and flowers and streams, and all those things that, for a mysterious reason that no one really knows, we agree to find lovely in Nature, and in so far as she can dramatize and personify her thoughts and express them in quite beautiful little stories, she is certainly justified in her claim. There is human tenderness and delicate irony. "The Story of the Heart of Colinette" would be worthy of Hans Andersen—and yet could only have been written by a woman. Perhaps we have a little too much of the Poet by the end of the book. But all the Fairy Princes and Beautiful Princesses are delightful. Girls who are anywhere within hail of the romantic age—and that begins surprisingly early and lasts surprisingly long—will find much treasure here, and they will not mind the sentiment.

On the other hand, Mrs. Dearmer's "Cockyolly Bird" is just a frank and triumphant children's book. There is no hidden purpose about its metamorphoses. It is just good, solid adventure, from the nursery table to the North Pole. Though she can be as sentimental as anybody when she likes, Mrs. Dearmer knows the nursery and what the nursery wants, and has done the splendidly right thing in not writing a real "fairy" book at all. Michael Fairless's "Stories Told to Children"—reprinted from "The Grey Brethren"—lie curiously between the two. Steeped in the nature-and-fairy-cult, she none the less essayed the sheer meaningless adventure for the children's sake, and the result is a medley of wild but often rich nonsense for the children, and of soulful nature-symbolism for the grown-ups. Just because it is such a mixture, one doubts if it will live so long as the quite undubious, frankly self-expressing "Roadmender." Taking it just as a children's book, there is too much sentiment and not enough definite imagination about "Tinkle-Tinkle," so earnestly recommended in the introduction. Far more to the purpose are the reckless high spirits of the naughty Fairy Fluffikins, who pulled the nightingale's tail. Why should she end in misery? Nothing would please the children more than a bad little fairy who never came to grief. But no! The canon-law of the grown-up fairy-religion forbids these joys, even in the nursery. She must be imprisoned for the rest of her natural life!

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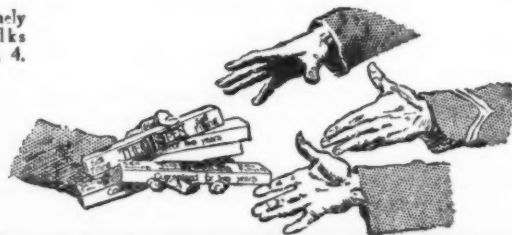
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There is something more than the fragrance of immemorial things about these old stories—something that makes it well to set them side by side with the new-minted fancies of modernity. We have seen the differences of fairy-tales. But there is a unity deeper than all difference. For you cannot tell a really good story of mere adventure for the children, without any thought of symbolism, but if it is good it turns out to be just like some old myth, and that myth will be the human echo of Nature's secret—of sun and moon, and stars and trees and flowers. It will be a fairy-tale after all. Among all other metamorphoses, let us not forget the metamorphosis of fairy-tales.

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"Sonnets of the Banner and the Star." By ARTHUR LYNCH. (Elkin Mathews. 4s. 6d. net.)

"A Bird of Paradise and Other Poems." By WILLIAM H. DAVIES. (Methuen. 1s. net.)

EVERYBODY who sees modern literature in adequate perspective knows that every year a certain number of books are produced which are sheer book-making, and a certain amount of verse which is sheer verse-making. Now, whatever the condition of mind which makes verses, but does not write poems, we may be quite certain that its incentive is not that of vision, or rapture, or inspiration. It depends for its results only upon an external stimulus. And, in the light of the poetic impulse, this expression, however valid its claim from other angles, is purely adventitious and irrelevant. It leaves the poetic temples inviolate, and makes no call either

welcome, indifferent, or hostile upon the professional addresses of the critic of poetry. And this, unfortunately, is the test of "The Witch-Maid." It is not so much that Miss Mackellar's utterance is commonplace; her metrical experiments loose, inharmonious, and at odds with the quality of her material; her thoughts without discovery, and her moods without adventure. It is that her verse is never transfigured by a spiritual or imaginative alchemy. There are rhymes and jingles; there is the accepted equipment of vocabulary and the potential material, but never a line of poetry. Her method is in miniature exactly these four lines:—

"She gazed on him who would not play, with gathering
surprise—
The man she did not understand, though she was very
wise."

And:—

"Here are Persian carpets, ivory and peach-bloom,
Tints to fill the heart of any child of man."

The second line in each couplet is a purely superfluous and arbitrary make-weight. It adds nothing; it merely amplifies a conception already complete. That is, indeed, the regular process of the verse-makers. With no central driving-force to set them in motion, they deliberately pile thought upon thought and rhyme upon rhyme as you add up a row of figures or heap together a number of separate parcels. But it is the way of poetry not to multiply but to divide.

Mr. Birch's verse, in spite of its sincerity and its familiarity with the poetic habit and tradition, is subject to the same capital limitation. Its sources are obvious enough, even without the sign-posts of such expressions as "dædal," "vestiture," "mellow fruitfulness," and "vastitude." And Mr. Birch, though he has frankly adopted the sensuous tone of Keats and the winged idealism of Shelley, is too skilled a workman to allow his apprenticeship to weigh too heavily upon him. But his verse can never achieve any kind of poetic definition, simply because it is solely descriptive and picturesque. Poetry, as a realized entity, must be, first and always, a revelation. The same dogma, of course, applies to every other form of art; but poetry, with far less latitude and under much stricter canons of treatment, must fulfil itself more quintessentially than, say, prose or music.

Mr. Lynch, again, who most inappropriately uses the sonnet form, devotes himself solely to the externalities of verse-making. He attempts to create the illusion of poetry, not by elongating an idea into a certain number of extra feet and a certain stretch of extra metre, which is Miss Mackellar's way; not by explaining the objects of interest on the way, and so assuming you have reached the Land of Promise, as Mr. Birch does; but by the sheer density of his expression. He is the last man in the world to be "a great, calm epicure, a stoic without strain," in his approach to the poetic attitude. He attempts rather to take the citadel of achievement by storm and tumult; or, as he would call it, by "passion's desarray." And, too, by the instrument of the magisterial sonnet form.

How difficult it is to say anything new about Mr. Davies, not only because his sober raptures have never changed since the appearance of "The Soul's Destroyer," but because the sweet, the infallible security of his numbers beguiles us not to write about him but to read him! It is curious how the tradition of his Elizabethan ancestry has persisted. For, after all, he is only Elizabethan in casual felicities, not in the context and synthesis of his work. These lines, for instance:—

"Nay, these rich moments are not lost,
But, like the morning's dewdrops, which
Into the sun their sweet lives cast,
To make his body far more rich—
So do these precious moments glide
Into her being, where they store;
Until I clasp her as my bride,
And get them back with thousands more;
Where they have banked in her sweet breast
And saved themselves with interest."

Or—

"Lilies so fair they challenge all the world,
And hold in silver tumblers their gold dice,
Ready to throw and win;"

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or—

"Great monsters in dark woods, with mighty mouths
That swallow their own faces when they yawn;"

or—

"Ere England launched her forests on the sea."

They have indeed the Elizabethan ring and something of that elaborate neatness of imagery which the "joyful nest" of Elizabethan "singing-birds" possessed. But the analogy is no more than a cousinship, for the simple reason that nobody but Mr. Davies could have written them. They are an individual effluence. No; what Mr. Davies's work emphasizes is the continuity of the lyrical heritage in English poetry—the orientation of the characteristically English poetic temper towards lyrical expression. That Mr. Davies, to some extent, reincarnates the Elizabethan lyric is because the quality of his mind approaches more nearly to the naturalistic values of the Renaissance than to the more complex, more questioning metaphysic of the nineteenth-century Romanticists. He is not a throw-back to the age of Campion and Herrick, but its legitimate descendant—an articulate interpreter of Nature's leafier moods who is not unduly oppressed by the paternalism which some of his more grudging critics would foist upon him. So much has been said in just praise of Mr. Davies's bewitching and extraordinarily cunning simplicities of inspiration and melody that we may leave this recognition as standardized. But perhaps the greatest asset of his Muse—and one which is the fountain of the genuine lyric gift—is the singular adequacy of his poetic cast of thought and emotion to its metrical content. His poetry is, to a quite wonderful extent, the unstained mirror of his feeling. Even in his worst moments (and in this as in previous volumes they have their part), his craftsmanship is never fumbling or uneasy. Rather, in the ebb of inspiration, it reproduces his thought with a too exact, a too precise, a too photographic fidelity. And to this who shall say that his gentle serenity, his spontaneous acceptance of life, his wise consciousness of his own poetic domain and its frontiers, his philosophy of joy and his sense of rapture, do not greatly contribute?—

"Four berries once,
In early hours,
Were pretty buds,
And then fair flowers."

"Drop, drop at once,
Your life is done;
You cannot feel
The dew or sun.

We are the same,
First buds, then flowers;
Hard berries then,
In our last hours.

Sweet buds, fair flowers,
Hard berries then—
Such is the life
Of plants and men."

It is not a difficult or an original thought; but it is universal, and how perfectly, how uniquely expressed!

FOUR NONDESCRIPTS.

- "Once a Week." By A. A. MILNE. (Methuen. 6s.)
 "But She Meant Well." By WILLIAM CAINE. (Lane. 6s.)
 "Thracian Sea." By JOHN HELSTON. (Nash. 6s.)
 "What a Woman Wants." By MRS. HENRY DUDENEY. (Heinemann. 6s.)

It is an unfortunate thing for the critic of novels that whenever he shows his hand it is nearly always full of platitudes rather than trumps. It is scarcely his fault, because at least eighty per cent. of the novels that come into his court are so obviously ill-clad, that his suggestions hardly require an abstruse speculation or a robust originality in the estimate of values. Now, it is a first essential of any novel, in whatever capacity it takes the field and however attenuated its idea, its conception, or its material, that what it sets out to do it should do properly. Its author may select a theme as fantastic or as puerile as he pleases, but let him achieve it; let him present it in a way that will not suggest he might as well be handling a mattock as a pen. It seems too high-

faluting to elevate this demand for adequate treatment into the artistic shibboleth of "form." For it is the most elementary canon for the writer, whether he desire to justify the ways of God to man or the complacency of his publisher to the public. And yet—well, is it necessary to go any further? The hardened novel-reader will know what we mean. He will know that a little child will lead that eighty per cent.

Poor Mr. Milne! It is not only once a week, but every week. Every week in the pages of "Punch" to be gambolling, like a puppy with his tail; every week to be blowing on the feather, to prevent it falling to the ground! Every week to be balancing some burlesque or airy trifle on the end of his nose! No wonder that the regular labor of many weeks will hardly bear condensation into a single volume which may be read in a day. No wonder that the weeds spring up and choke the flower or two that we diligently seek. Mr. Milne's flourishes achieve their effect when they are spontaneous; but when they are mechanised and executed under the disciplinary system which "once a week" too often produces, they remind us of the drill-yard. They fail, in fact, to accomplish that pitch of the ludicrous at which the author so consistently aims.

We confess to a large partiality for Mr. Caine—he so thoroughly enjoys himself when he writes. Not for him is the authorship which fixes one eye painfully on the press and the newsagent orders, and the other imploringly on fame. "But She Meant Well" is of the adventures of Hannah (aged five)—beneficent and well-intentioned Hannah, who is so anxious to perform "little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love" to the adults around her who are in any way afflicted with a troublesome circumstance; abominable Hannah, the instrument of the malevolent Furies, whose paralysing deeds bring such dire consequences upon the household, and are such an ironical reflection upon the intentions that fattened them. The book is frankly extravagant—outrageously extravagant; and its episodes are diabolically twisted to the author's Machiavellian purpose. But the point is that Mr. Caine does exactly what he wants to do. He and Mr. Milne employ practically the same method. But Mr. Milne swims about in the enclosed tank of his invention with a lifebelt on; Mr. Caine, on the other hand, chooses more open waters, and frisks in them with the agility of an eel. He is extravagant, if you like; but how exquisitely ingenious! He is perhaps artificial; but what a brisk, refreshing, bubbling style to buoy his midsummer madness! At any rate, we prefer Mr. Caine's excursus of consummate fancy to many of the solemn, surplised, psychological pilgrimages on which some of our more ambitious but worse equipped pundits so often travel.

And, candidly, we prefer him infinitely to Mr. Helston, with his moralizings, precepts, and edifications. The solemnity of "Thracian Sea" is almost too great to be borne. This is the way Mr. Helston talks:—

"At almost regular intervals, it seemed, he accompanied his reading by solemn, if otherwise somewhat spiritless, suggestions to a deity anent the advisability of removing his eyesight."

Or this:—

"How she would love her hero when he came! Where was he, among all this strange, delightful mystery that wrapped the woods and hills? That he was dark and handsome she quite understood; also, that he was strong and tender—a masterful man, whose strength had been his weakness on one dreadful occasion when he had fallen to the wiles of a certain sorceress, who always wore her hair in two long plaits while she prepared potentially unholy charms with which she smeared her voluptuous lips."

Yes; Mr. Helston's heroine is a very romantical young lady. Would you have more?

"The dust that rhymeth with thy name is thy symbol (i.e., lust), and yet . . . art thou a bitter god? Whence comest thou? And goest thou whither? Art thine eyes blind with the weariness of scores of dead dawns? or haply hath too much watching for the darkness, across too many sunsets, stained thy sight? . . . Art thou a scornful thing (query—scorned?), or one exceeding great beyond all other gods that be? Art but a goad in the hands of the Unseen, who, with thee drives his children, with stripes, along life's highway to their unknown goal?"

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So now you see why Helen, who is the wife of James Burkett, who should have been the husband of Margaret Yeomans (an artless maid, as her reveries suggest), is splendid and pagan and strong, and rides to death on her charger, "Thracian Sea." Now you see why the hero, who loves Helen with a dreadful, insatiable love, and drags himself to her grave to die, is called the Rev. Mervyn Ingestre. Now you see why Mr. Helston is so prodigal of his apostrophes and parentheses to run his book into 400 pages. Indeed, Mr. Helston's earnestness is the death of him.

Mrs. Dudeney is also intensely sincere, but the fruits of it grow into something permanent and substantial. She carries, in fact, her artistic purpose to its logical and inevitable end. It is remarkable that she does, for her style is against her. But the maturity of her experience, the solid truth of her perspective, the determined if slow evolution of her central idea, and, be it said, her deep sympathy with and understanding of Sussex countryfolk bring her through. The book is a photographic record of the spiritual Odyssey of Christmas Hamlyn, an obscure, reticent, mystical personality, full of character, and humbly unconscious of it. "What a Woman Wants" is more like a novel of Mr. Hardy's than any we remember to have met.

BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"The Renaissance of the Greek Ideal." By DIANA WATTS. (Heinemann. 21s. net.)

Mrs. WATTS claims to have re-discovered the principle of balance in movement under tension on which the whole of Greek athletic training was based, and which was responsible for the Greek perfection of physical form. Tension, she explains as "a connecting of the farthest outposts with headquarters," a linking together of every muscle which produces "the maximum of power with the minimum of effort, resulting in movement all in one piece, as it were." Associated with this muscular control is a system of balance on the ball and the first three toes, which will enable us to acquire the Greek foot, while at the same time it is necessary to develop the muscles of the diaphragm and those round the waist. When these preliminaries are understood and accomplished true rhythmic motion will be possible, and it will be easy to attain such graceful positions as those of the Herakles of the *Egina* pediment or of the Discobolus of Myron. Mrs. Watts's book is illustrated by reproductions of these ancient statues and photographs of herself in similar positions. It deserves the attention of all who are engaged in gymnastic training.

The Week in the City.

THE Board of Trade returns for November, which were issued on Tuesday, showed a small reduction of one million on October, and a very heavy decline as compared with November of last year. As compared with November, 1913, the reduction in exports amounts to 20 millions sterling, or 45 per cent. The total decline in production is much less, because thousands of factories, which last year were working for foreign and colonial customers, are now working for the British Army, and are being paid for out of the proceeds of the new war loan. The idea that payments to the war loan would reduce supplies in the Money Market, and lead to

a rise in discount rates, has not yet been realized. The reduction in our foreign trade, and the much greater reduction in foreign trade bills, as well as the general cessation of new enterprise, may well account for the combination of heavy borrowing and cheap money. Meanwhile, the reopening of Stock Exchanges for restricted dealings in New York and Chicago, and the reopening of the Paris Bourse for cash transactions are leading to renewed questions as to the masterly inactivity, if not timidity, of the London Stock Exchange Committee. It is rumored that the Treasury is partly responsible, but it may be hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will, before long, come to realize that the maintenance of sham prices for Consols and other Government Securities is not of national interest, and that the discredit of closed Stock Exchanges is becoming serious.

MOVEMENTS IN MALACCA.

Malacca rubber shares, which in the last days of July fell to 2½ from about 4½ at the beginning of the month, have sprung back again to this latter figure during the past few days. In the days of the boom the shares reached 18½, and for more than twelve months from the end of 1911 they were held at 10 or over on the strength of the directors' declaration that they would be able to distribute regular quarterly dividends of 25 per cent. from then onwards. They paid six consecutive quarterly dividends, it is true, but they paid them from the profits of three separate years, so that those who bought shares thinking that "25 per cent. quarterly" meant that the company would earn 100 per cent. per annum were undeceived when 25 per cent. quarterly was no longer possible. The accounts of the company do not enable one to calculate exactly the cost of production, but it appears to be so high that it is doubtful whether any profit at all can be earned on 2s. rubber, and the shares are much over-valued at 4½. The recent rise has been due to a "bear squeeze," a number of people evidently having sold short on the expectation of a further decline. The market in the shares, however, seems to be well under control, and investors and speculators, whether on the long or short side, would be well advised to beware of Malacca.

HUMBER PROFITS.

Last year the report of the ill-starred Humber Company, the pioneer of cycle and motor engineering in this country, gave promise of that era of prosperity for which shareholders had waited so long. It had cleared up its balance-sheet of the legacies of unfortunate ventures into aeroplane and other unfruitful enterprises, and earned a profit of £50,000, which sufficed to pay off one year's arrears of dividend on the preference shares, and leave £30,000 to be carried forward. High hopes were formed for the year just closed, and the preference shares went up to 17s. in anticipation of receiving the remainder of their three years' arrears of dividend very soon. But this year's profits are only £23,500, although the accounts only cover one month of war-time trading. The directors say that on the outbreak of war orders were cancelled and stock thrown back on their hands, but the balance-sheet only shows a rise from £189,000 to £213,000 in the stock-in-trade since last year. However, for once in a way, the company has found a design of car which satisfies it for more than one season, so that it will not have to face the problem of disposing of last year's unsold models. The directors say they have secured orders from the Government for certain things, but the shareholders' prospects of receiving next year more than the one year's preference dividend with which they have to be content this time, are not very bright. The company's great trouble is its original over-capitalization, a relic of the days of the bicycle boom.

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